

**THEATRICALITY, CHEAP PRINT, AND THE HISTORIOGRAPHY
OF THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR**

A Dissertation

by

JAEMIN CHOI

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2010

Major Subject: English

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ABSTRACT

Theatricality, Cheap Print, and the Historiography of the English Civil War. (May 2010)

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Until recent years, the historical moment of Charles II's return to England was universally accepted as a clear marker of the end of "the Cavalier winter," a welcome victory over theater-hating Puritans. To verify this historical view, literary historians have often glorified the role of King Charles II in the history of the "revival" of drama during the Restoration, whereas they tend to consider the Long Parliament's 1642 closing of the theaters as a decisive manifestation of Puritans' antitheatricalism. This historical perspective based upon what is often known as "the rupture model" has obscured the vibrant development of dramatic forms during the English civil wars and the ways in which the revolutionary energy exploded during this period continued to influence in the Restoration the deployment of dramatic forms and imagination across various social groups. By focusing on the generic development of drama and theatricality during the English civil wars, my dissertation challenges the conventional

historiography of the English civil war literature, which has been overemphasizing the discontinuity between the English civil war and the periods before and after it.

The first chapter shows how the theatrical energy displaced from traditional cultural domains energized an emerging cheap print market and contributed to the invention of new dramatic forms such as playlets and newsbooks. The second chapter questions the conventional association of Puritanism and antitheatricalism by re-historicizing antitheatrical writers and their pamphlets and by highlighting the dramatic impulses at work in Puritan iconoclasm during the English civil wars. The final chapter offers the Restoration Milton as a case study to illustrate how the proposed historical perspective replacing “the rupture model” better explains not only the politics of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* but also of Restoration drama.

To my parents, Kioc Choi and Soongil Kim

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Periodization and Seventeenth Century Literature

One of the convenient cognitive tools we use daily is classification. Classification is essential for the clear recognition of otherwise unintelligible economy of time, space, and text. It is by articulating the murky flow of change, whether temporal and spatial, into several meaningful units that we are able to build our hermeneutic framework and marshal our intellectual forces against confusion and disorder. Nonetheless, as recent European thinkers such as Derrida and Foucault have taught us, classification can be deceiving when we fail to question its artificial and arbitrary ‘nature’ and, instead, take for granted the very cognitive lens through which we see the individualized objects. My dissertation proposes to question one of the common practices used for classification of literary texts—periodization—by looking at problems with the conventional timeline of seventeenth-century literature and how such a practice of periodization has the possibility to obscure rather than to clarify the understanding of literature.

There are few literary periods that have been so thoroughly fragmented into separate sub-periods as the seventeenth century.

This dissertation follows the style of the *MLA Handbook*.

Subdivided into the segments of the early seventeenth century, the English Civil War, and the Restoration, the century exhibits no unity and coherence. Instead of seeking to unite this fragmented picture of seventeenth-century literature, most scholars limit their interests to one of these sub-areas and become specialists on literary practices within the smaller periods. The result is that a wide gap between one sub-period and another emerges and remains open. It is against this background that Harold Love points out (though he himself neglects to give much thought to the existence of English Civil War literature) that the study of seventeenth-century literature has been dominated by two separate groups of specialists who do not share the same agenda:

Literary Scholars working on the earlier Stuart period define themselves as Renaissance specialists, inhabiting a different conceptual as well as historical world from those working on the later Stuart period who define themselves as Augustan specialists. Those Renaissance specialists who concern themselves with Caroline authors further define themselves as studying the end of a process of development which reached its highest point with Shakespeare, while Restoration scholars see themselves as occupied with the beginning of a process which is to reach fruition in Pope and the eighteenth-century novelists. Despite the existence of the Oxford book of *Seventeenth-century verse* there is no such subject as seventeenth-century literature in our academics.¹

¹ Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford & New York:

In this sense, to understand how the English Civil War (and the Interregnum) has functioned in this timeline is quite important since it has been constantly used as a prominent sign of the discontinuity of the period. Instead of treating it as an one-time political disaster, which disrupted the otherwise smooth passage of early modern England, my dissertation proposes to approach it as a cultural, though violent, manifestation of the century-long struggles between Royalists and “Puritans.” When we locate the main issues of this event in the domain of culture, then we are able to trace out more effectively its origins and effects, whose duration covers the whole century and beyond.

There would be many possible lines of inquiry to interrogate the conventional historiography of seventeenth century literature based on an assumption of a sudden rupture caused by the English civil wars. My dissertation will challenge this rupture model by focusing on the continuing development of drama and theatricality during the English civil wars². Traditionally, the English civil wars have been depicted as an unwanted interruption to dramatic activities that almost killed the life of English drama. To prove this point, scholars often cited the closing down of public theaters by Puritans. Edmund Morgan, for example, identifies Puritans as theater-haters and the English civil

Clarendon; Oxford University Press, 1993), 8.

² For a detailed criticism of the rupture model, which the theoretical frame work of this dissertation is primarily indebted to, see Margaret J.M. Ezell, "Literary History's Alternate Groove: The Expectations of Periodization and Seventeenth-Century Literary Culture," *Literature Compass*, 3.3 (2006): 444-52. For another comparable criticism of the conventional periodic practices of the Restoration, see Steven N. Zwicker, "Is There Such a Thing as Restoration Literature?" *Huntington Library Quarterly: Studies in English and American History and Literature*, 69.3 (2006): 425-49; Jonathan Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis, 1677-1683* (Cambridge University Press, 1991), 4-17.

wars as the lowest point of dramatic activities due to their political dominance, and so reads the history of early modern drama in the following way:

The longest, most bitter, and most effective attacks on the theatre came from English Puritans. Beginning with a burst of books and pamphlets about 1579, the literature of denunciation reached its culmination in William Prynne's *Histrion-mastix* in 1632. [. . .] Prynne lost his ears for his labors because the king thought the book reflected on the royal taste for theatrical amusements; but Prynne had his way in 1642, when the Long Parliament closed the English theaters.³

Morgan relies upon rather than questions the stereotypical image of Puritans as joy-killers, and elides the complexity of relationship between Puritans as religious groups and the Long Parliament as a political body. This oversimplified reading of early modern drama history continues in the portrait of King Charles II and the Royalists. Some critics depict them as heroes who rescued imperiled drama by reopening theaters and reviving theatrical activities across nation. For example, Jocelyn Powell in *Restoration Theatre Production* writes that Charles II's return "herald[ed] a restoration, or even a resurrection, of the stage" (3). In a similar manner, John E. Cunningham, with the quotes from the autobiography of the actor Colley Cibber, suggests that "there was an immediate surge of dramatic interest and activity" when "Charles returned" (11). The association of Charles II's return with the liberation of theatrical activities is also found

³ Edmund S. Morgan, "Puritan Hostility to the Theatre," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society Held at Philadelphia for Promoting Useful Knowledge*, 110 (1966), 340.

and strongly pronounced in Richard W. Bevis's *English Drama: Restoration and Eighteenth century*. When Charles returned from exile, he notes, "no one shouted louder than the theater folk, themselves as good as restored, who set out within a few months to create a patriotic theatre that would compliment the King and celebrate his social and monarchical ideals" (25).

Although the traditional dichotomy between Puritans and Royalists on the question of theatricality still remains popular, some recent studies on seventeenth-century English history and literature have started to recognize the complexity of the dynamics between the agents of social change and have started to question the rupture model emphasizing the discontinuity between the Restoration and previous periods. Jonathan Scott's *England's Troubles* and N. H. Keeble's *The Restoration*, for example, persuasively detail and explain the nature of religious and political crisis that had divided England throughout the seventeenth century until the final settlement of state building in 1688. Of course, the primary focuses of these two books are different. The latter focuses more on the political and religious conflicts between Puritan Dissenters and the Royalists during the Restoration which reveal the second round of cultural war, and the former is more about how the fear of Catholic power abroad continued to exert its influence throughout the latter half of the century. Nevertheless, despite their differences in focus, these two books help us to understand that the cultural and political anxiety of Restoration society cannot be adequately measured without locating it within

the larger context of century-long ideological conflicts over cultural and political reforms.

If Scott's and Keeble's new studies encourage us to rethink the traditional understanding of the Restoration as a prelude to the peace and prosperity of eighteenth-century England, Daniel Randall's *Winter Fruit* (1994) is very helpful for correcting the traditional biases concerning dramatic activities during the civil wars and the Interregnum. According to him, the popular belief that drama was dead during the 1640s and 1650s is only partially true. Even though performances in public theatres during the English Civil War were officially prohibited, he found that "throughout the ensuing official hiatus in playing, dramas continued to be composed, translated, revived, transmuted, published, bought, read, and even acted" (2). Not only did traditional semi-theatrical events such as "The Lord Mayor's shows," "puppet shows," and "drolls" continue to furnish theatrical entertainments to ordinary folks but "masquelike shows on disguise, song, and dance" were also occasionally staged for the audiences of noblemen in special circumstances (140; 145; 182).

Randall's book fills in the gap of English dramatic history by recovering and compiling dramatic activities and attesting to the vibrant theatrical energy present during the English civil wars. As will soon become clear, I am not entirely in agreement with the theoretical assumptions revealed in his book. Nonetheless, his study is one of the prominent examples showing scholars' recent interests in dramatic activities of the English civil war. Aside from Randall's *Winter Fruit*, there has been since the 1990s

increased attention to English civil war literature and drama since 1990s. Among the studies are James Loxley's *Royalism and Poetry in the English Civil Wars* (1997); Diane Purkiss' *Literature, Gender and Politics During the English Civil War* (2005); Nigel Smith's *Literature and Revolution in England, 1640-1660* (1994); and Susan Wiseman's *Drama and Politics in the English Civil War* (1998). These books enrich our understanding of hitherto relatively neglected English civil war literature, and my dissertation not only reflects the new findings from the recent studies of English civil war literature, but also endeavors to appropriate and synthesize these authors' insights and their newfound primary materials, including pamphlets, newsbooks, and legal documents, into my own reading of the flow of the period.

B. Theatricality and the Revolutionary Period

Before briefly summarizing each chapter, I want to explain my understanding of theatricality and its relevance to the English civil wars. The notion of theatricality serves as a central theoretical framework in my dissertation that gives thematic coherence to each chapter, and since its notion is as much controversial as popular, it is desirable to clarify my approach to the term and the critically debated issues regarding theatricality.

The popularity of the term theatricality in early modern studies can be largely attributed to the wide influence of New Historicism. New Historicism often used the term of theatricality to communicate how the royal power exploited theatricality and ravish spectacle to govern his people through the sumptuous display of power and

wealth. For example, in Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, theatricality became a characteristic marker of the court culture of Henry VIII and Elizabeth, describing the skills the humanists and courtiers had to interiorize to win the battle for fame and honor.⁴ Instead of confining the significance of drama within the boundary of genre studies or any other traditional theories that presuppose the autonomy of literature from its historical contexts, New Historicists explore the points of connection between drama and the world that it sought to represent -- or to be more accurate, question the very boundary between the former and the latter. By so doing, New Historicists are seeking to debunk the romanticist view of literature and art as the embodiment of unity and coherence shielded from chaotic non-meaning of the external world and, instead, suggest that the experience of transcendence that a literary work offers is not free from the grid of Foucaultian power into which it is always already implicated and thrown, even though the reading subject or writing subject might think otherwise. Thus, for Leah Marcus as a New Historicist, the moment of transcendence that Machiavelli celebrates in the letter to his friend, as he describes his daily reading as a form of friendly conversation with Greek and Roman writers, does not indicate a complete break from reality but a more complicated interaction with it.

⁴ For example, in the chapter "At the Table of the Great," Greenblatt depicts the psychological and spiritual struggles that Thomas More might have undergone in the theatrical world of Henry VIII and summarizes the significant role of theatricality in the Renaissance as the following: "More did not simply judge this world [i.e. the theatrical world created by the monarch]; he participated in it as an actor of alienation and his observation of the behavior of the great, it also expresses his own mode of engagement in society" (29, words in brackets added by me).

On the threshold I slip off my day's clothes with their mud and dirt, put on my royal and curial robes, and enter, decently accoutred, the ancient courts of men of old, where I am welcomed kindly and fed on that fare which is mine alone, and for which I was born: where I am not ashamed to address them and ask them the reasons for their action, and they reply considerately; and for two hours I forget all my cares, I know no more trouble, death loses its terrors: I am utterly translated in their company.⁵

In the view of New Historicists, the scene of solitary space that Machiavelli conjures up “amid the ignominy of exile” has a “manufactured and performative quality” (Marcus, “Renaissance” 45). By allowing his friend to see what he wants to be seen, he self-fashions himself into a learned courtier that looks like a good hire for possible patrons. The private space and solitary moment that the letter carefully creates for the reader, then, is not so much free from the practical calculation of loss and gain as it first appears. In this sense, Machiavelli's daily reading in his study and his desire to share the moment of transcendence is just as theatrical as the actors' showy behaviors spotlighted in the theater.

As the above example shows, theatricality is one of the key concepts that New Historicists are using to challenge the traditional boundary between drama and its outside world. Just as deconstructionists refuse to confine textuality to the works of art and instead expand its notion to include ordinary social behaviors and artifacts, New

⁵ Qtd in Leah S. Marcus, “Renaissance/Early Modern Studies,” *Redrawing the Boundaries*, eds. Stephen Greenblatt and Giles Gunn (New York: MLA, 1992), 45.

Historicists see theatricality not simply inside the walls of public theaters but also outside of them. Thus, public ceremonies such as coronations, weddings, funerals, and traditional festivals, which had served only as the background for the analysis of early modern drama, are now being seen by New Historicists as competing modes of theatricality. By collapsing the distinction between art and everyday life under the aegis of theatricality, New Historicism enables us to observe more closely the complicated negotiations of power among various social agents and how a drama strengthens and/or subverts the power relations through which it was produced and informed.

The middle seventeenth century of England, about which my dissertation is mainly concerned, offers a promising testing ground for the improvement of our understanding of theatricality and its ties to early modern culture. Dislocated from its primarily cultural locus (that is public theaters), theatricality had to find new cultural domains that can accommodate the energy of its displaced theatricality. As we shall see later in detail, the rapid growth and development of journalism in the form of newsbook and pamphlets was one of the major social domains that hosted the new development of theatricality during that time.

What is odd from my point of view is the sparse attention hitherto invested in what seems to me a remarkable expansion of theatricality during the time. It's true that several books on drama during the civil wars and the Interregnum have been recently published to challenge the traditional view of the period as simply being devoid of theatrical activities. As I acknowledged earlier, Dale Randall's *Winter Fruit* is one of

the recent publications that offers us rich details and facts supporting the continuing existence of drama and its activities even during the civil wars and the Interregnum. Nonetheless, Randall's book does not ask for radical overhaul of the current scholarship of seventeenth century drama, since its primary purpose seems to lie in supplementing our knowledge of drama history with new discoveries made through archival research and textual studies -- while keeping the theoretical premises underpinning our understanding of drama intact. The fourth chapter of the book, "The Paper War," can be a case in point. In the chapter, Randall discusses "the outburst of pamphlet writing" and "the short-drama like pieces that played so lively a part among the pamphlets" and acknowledges them as indicative of the wide circulation of dramatic metaphors in the time of war (52; 53). However, for Randall, this emergence of new printed materials failed to constitute an important part of drama history, because they were, at best, "dramatic" (53).

In attempting to deal with the short, drama-like pieces that played so lively a part among the pamphlets, one may be inclined occasionally to assign them to some segment or other of the dramatic spectrum. Probably it is best, however, to deny them any but a peripheral place, illuminating but ancillary. Since it seems unfair to the fact of the day to pass over them in silence, perhaps the most valid way to handle them in a book on the drama is to consider them as dramatic – but not dramas.⁶

⁶ Randall 53.

In the eyes of critics like Randall, the conceptual boundary between “dramas” and “dramatic” appears to be very clear and sharp. But it is arguable how approximately early modern people possessed the same sense of drama as we have now, considering the fact that the arts had not yet developed into an autonomous field. As indicated in the famous soliloquy of Macbeth (5.5.19), life was often imagined as “the stage” and a human being in it was a “player” who should act out a given role, however absurd and meaningless it might appear to the lost soul like Macbeth, before the call of time. The desire to articulate the ways of life into a collectively recognizable form and language of art (and vice versa) is also strongly visible in Royalists’ writings during the civil wars. In the face of chaotic situations and events created by the civil wars, for example, Lovelace used the language of pastoral and chivalric romance to give expression to his disquieting experiences, and Herrick adopted the voice of “Horace and Anacreon,” thereby collapsing the temporal and conceptual gap between the imaginary and the real (Corns 74-8, 99). As I will argue in the following chapters, the mid seventeenth century is marked by unprecedented theatrical energies, and it is for the purpose of controlling these otherwise explosive energies that the parliament had to close down public theaters rather than for moral and religious principles. In other words, closing down theaters, contrary to what is widely believed, marks the high watermark of theatricality and the proliferation of theatrical energies into different cultural domains. Thus, it is neither easy nor promising to isolate the development of drama during the time from its

interactions with other cultural and political components and to maintain the boundary between drama and the dramatic.

If theatricality was strikingly visible during the civil wars and the Interregnum, then one might ask why literary historians, especially New Historicists, have failed to recognize its prominence. One of the possible reasons for this failure might lie in the questionable opposition between textuality and theatricality, which New Historicists have tended to assume rather than question when analyzing and comparing the early modern to the modern. Foucault's influential book, *Discipline and Punish*, encourages the reading of the early modern as exclusively theatrical, a society whose operation mode was primarily governed by the spectacle of power. On the other hand, our modern society

is one not of spectacle, but of surveillance; under the surface of images, one invests bodies in depth; behind the great abstraction of exchange, there continues the meticulous, concrete training of useful forces; the circuits of communication are the supports of an accumulation and a centralization of knowledge; the play of signs defines the anchorages of power.⁷

Modern power mechanism, according to Foucault, is governed by the systematic distribution and circulation of knowledge and power with the aim of disciplining individual bodies. Individual bodies in our society no longer assume the spectacular

⁷ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish : The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 217.

trappings signifying the arbitrary will of power. Instead, they function like well controlled and coordinated machines and, thus everyday practices that involve human bodies and psyches are administered, recorded and, if possible, quantified into the minutest level. In this way, Foucault would argue, the theatrical experiences based upon rituals and ceremonies are no longer powerful in modern times, whereas the growth of the textual medium continues to strengthen the symbolic symbiosis of knowledge and power.

The implied opposition in Foucault's theory between textuality (modernity) and theatricality (pre-modernity) echoes in subsequent scholarly works on drama and theatricality. Kristeva sees our society as one in which it is no longer possible to have genuine theatrical experience because textual interactions dominate modern society, rendering it devoid of the ground for "demonstration" and "a communal discourse of play (inter-play)" (277).

As its only remaining locus of interplay is the space of language, modern theater no longer exists outside of the text. . . . It is a failure of demonstration, of the theater as de-monstration. Severed from its intralinguistic production (le langage), this de-monstration can do nothing but chain itself to the normative ideologies to which the failure of contemporary social sets, and perhaps, even the failure of the human race, affixes itself.⁸

⁸ Julia Kristeva, "Modern Theater Does Not Take (a) Place," *Sub-stance: A Review of Theory*

Kristeva's lament for the disappearance of communal relationship in the modern society and her attempts to read the significance of theaters in a psychoanalytic and semiotic perspective produces a different diagnosis of modern society. But Kristeva is not much different from Foucault when it comes to the view that the modern world is controlled by the codes of language and information and the increasing manipulation by/through them, which pushes us away from the world of theaters that we had once inhabited. New Historicists share this theoretical definition of modernity, and combined with the traditional view of English civil war periods as a breaking point from the early modern world, they are inclined to see the 1640s and 1650s as the decisive blow to the era of theatricality, and they normally see the Restoration as a futile attempt to turn the clock back against the tide of modernization. Seen in this way, the blindness of critics to theatricality as manifested in the civil war periods is a product of current historiography. And this historiography is in turn supported by several assumptions that my dissertation wants to interrogate.

The first of these assumptions says that theatricality is a historical mode of power, which in the conceptual map of literary history should stand in opposition to textuality; second, that the cultural and political movements driven by Puritans during the English civil war and the Interregnum were anti-theatrical, and should be viewed in the historical scene as opposite to Royalists culture and politics; third, that theatricality and its

significance should be circumscribed within the boundaries of drama as genre and its neighboring cultural domains.

By looking at the ways in which the political crisis in the mid seventeenth century led theatricality into a new phase of its history and by looking at how print culture and religious fervors fostered rather than stunted the development of theatricality, my dissertation will question the validity of the theoretical assumptions outlined above. More specifically, in the first chapter, I will attempt to show how the conventional idea of Puritans as theater-haters skews the understanding of the 1642 parliamentary act closing public theaters and of the consequent polemic discourse on drama between the Royalists and the Parliamentarians during the 1640s and the 1650s. I will also trace a new development of theatricality mediated through newsbooks and pamphlets to illustrate the experiments with dramatic forms during the time, anchored in print media and reading public. In the second chapter, I turn my attention to the cultural reformation movement often called ‘iconoclasm,’ in order to show that iconoclasm served as the condition of early modern dramatic experiences, instead of as a serious threat to them as some critics have argued.⁹ For the sake of convenience, this chapter is chronologically arranged into two parts. The first part complicates our understanding of iconoclasm during the Elizabethan and Jacobean period by challenging the traditional interpretation of anti-theatrical tracts as a typical manifestation of Puritans’ hatred of drama allegedly

⁹ See, for example, Michael O’Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye : Iconoclasm and Theater in Early-Modern England* (New York: Oxford UP, 2000) ; Patrick Collinson, *From Iconoclasm to Iconophobia: the Cultural Impact of the Second English Reformation* (Reading: U. of Reading, 1988).

rooted in their devotion to iconoclasm.¹⁰ The second part depicts the further development of iconoclasm during the personal rule of King Charles and the English civil wars in order to suggest that iconoclasm can be better viewed as deconstructive, social practices enabling the proliferation of multiple cultural forms which had been hitherto suppressed under the symbolic power of the state. What this chapter eventually suggests is that iconoclasm fostered rather than limited dynamic interactions between word and image and between the form of worship and divine experience, paradoxically transforming everyday practices into a spiritual battle in which each Christian is called upon to act and to perform his or her Christian duties. In the third chapter, I use Milton's *Paradise Lost* as a case study to illustrate how the expanded view of theatricality expounded in the pervious chapters can enrich our understanding of this Restoration poem. Milton's *Paradise Lost* exposes the problem with a stereotypical representation of Puritans as theater-haters because the sublime beauty of the work and its theatricality cannot be properly understood without the Puritan culture of which Milton wanted to be a representative voice. By tracing Milton's keen interests in dramatic works as well as his written defense of the use of drama for reformation purposes, this chapter argues that Milton's dramatic imagination in *Paradise Lost* is in a perfect tune with Puritan culture and with reformation interests. The last section of this chapter illustrates how Milton's *Paradise Lost* also reveals the problem of traditional periodization, according to which the restored Stuart Court quickly occupied the center

¹⁰ As for the exemplary statements identifying antitheatricalism as a literary counterpart of iconoclasm, see O'Connell, 17-18; Jonas Barish, *The Antitheatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley: U. of California P., 1981), 88-89.

of the literary world and dominated literary activities. By revisiting the re-opening of the public theaters and studying the discourse of diversion then popular among the Royalists, this section focuses on the anxiety of the Royalists about the revolutionary energy that had driven England into a civil war as well as their new cultural strategy for channeling that energy. In this way, the Royalists' intervention in theatrical enterprises will be understood as part of the cultural reforms which aimed to defuse religious enthusiasm and reformation zeal and to replace them with socially acceptable diversions. Against this cultural background, the last pages will be devoted to a discussion of the literary forms of Milton's *Paradise Lost* so that we can recognize more clearly Milton's covert refusal of the cultural agenda supported by the Royalists and his conscious alignment with the dissenters' community. In other words, the final analysis will show that Milton's *Paradise Lost* is neither a defeatist work nor a product of solitary, spiritual retreat divorced from political reality and action. Instead, Milton's *Paradise Lost* emerges as a literary performance firmly rooted in Puritan Dissenters' community, which had fought against the governing elites not only to preserve their Christian liberty and civil rights but also to fashion their own dramatic imagination and cultural taste.

CHAPTER II

EMERGENCE OF NEW THEATRICALITY

A. The 1642 Parliament Order and Its Aftermath

Revisiting the Parliament Order of 1642

On 2 September 1642, the Long Parliament ordered public theaters closed, and this political event has been often interpreted as a clear example of Puritans' hostility toward theaters. J. Dover Wilson, for example, argues that "the main intentions of the act were moral" (459). "The stage," he continues, "was swept away by the tide of puritan indignation and hatred," and "the puritan campaign against the stage" ended with "the victory of 1642" (459; 460). In a similar vein, Herbert Grierson reiterates the year of 1642 as the culmination of the century-long Puritan warfare against the stage: "The other [picture of seventeenth century English drama] is "a continuous stream of protest against drama and the stage [by Puritans], gathering in strength till when the Long Parliament meets one of its earliest acts is to close the public theaters" (69). In this opening section, I will attempt to complicate the history and the significance of the 1642 ordinance closing theaters by reading critically the order and situating it within the historical contexts from which it emerged and from which its subsequent development took place. As will become clear, locating the cause of the legal action purely in moral and religious grounds becomes problematical when one looks at the wording of the order and the immediate context from which the order emerged. Specifically, the parliament order would be better viewed as a safety measure to prevent the possible spread of public

disturbances that could aggravate the already dangerous political conditions of England at the time.

The sense of political urgency is evident in the 1642 parliament order. Although it is lengthy, the order deserves to be fully cited here so that we can appreciate the rhetorical situation by which the order was constrained and at the same time to which it reacted.

The order says,

Whereas the distress and Estate of Ireland, steeped in her own Blood, and the distracted Estate of England, threatened with a Cloud of Blood by a Civil War, call for all possible Means to appease and avert the Wrath of God, appearing in these Judgements; among which, Fasting and Prayer have been tried to be very effectual . . . and are still enjoined; and whereas Public Sports do not well agree with Public Calamities, nor Public Stage-plays with the Seasons of Humiliation, this being an Exercise of sad and pious solemnity, and the other being Spectacles of Pleasure, too commonly expressing lascivious Mirth, and Levity, it is therefore thought fit, and Ordained, by the Lords and Commons in this Parliament Assembled, That, while these sad Causes and set times of Humiliation does continue, public Stage-plays shall cease and be forborne, instead of which are recommended to the People of this land the profitable and seasonable considerations of Repentance, Reconciliation

and Peace with God, which probably may produce outward Peace and Prosperity, and bring again Times of Joy and Gladness to these Nations.¹

The rhetoric employed here is basically not much different from the traditional one that the King and his officials used when they justified closing down theaters in the event of national disasters or outbreaks of epidemics such as plagues. Instead of harsh words against drama, it bases the reason for closing theaters upon a traditional conviction that plays are unsuitable when times are perilous and call for thoughtful measures. Although one might glimpse a tinge of antipathy toward public theaters -- when the order finds a fault with “Stage-plays” for “too commonly expressing lascivious Mirth, and Levitie,” - it maintains a neutral attitude overall toward commercial theaters by characterizing them as a kind of “Publike Sports” or “Spectacles of Pleasure,” which English people could enjoy when “Times of Joy and Gladness” return.

External evidence also supports the assertion that the 1642 order was mainly a preventive measure against potential public unrest. First, although Grierson describes the closing of the theaters as if it were one of the very first things the Long Parliament took care of when it met, the truth is that the parliament refused to close theaters, when a similar bill was first “introduced by a moderate Puritan, Edward Partridge, the baron for Sandwich” in January 1642, “on the grounds that playing was a 'trade' enhancing the economy of the capital and therefore should not be inhibited”(Kastan 169). Between January and September of the same year, the parliament changed its position and, as a

¹ “Order for Stage-plays to Cease,” *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum Great Britain*, vol. 1, eds. C. H. Firth, and Robert S. Rait (London: HMSO, 1911), 26-7.

couple of recent studies suggest, the change was likely caused by the increasing possibility of civil war.²

To be more specific, the year 1642 saw a rapid build-up of tension between the crown and the parliament. The Long Parliament issued the Grand Remonstrance, officially complaining about what they thought were King Charles' unlawful and abusive acts of power. As part of his response to resolve the conflict, in January 1642, King Charles attempted to arrest five members of the leading group on a charge of treason and, after failing to arrest them, he departed London for fear that the predominantly protestant city might no longer support him. In the summer of the same year, the king and the parliament started to raise armies in expectation of military actions. It was in the middle of this preparation for war that the parliament decided to issue the order to close public theaters. And the wording of the order clearly shows that the parliament saw its decision as driven by the alarming and bloody situation that England had recently fallen into. Once the situation goes back to normal, the order seems to imply, by restricting the prohibition to a time of "sad causes" and "humiliation," the public theaters will be able to open again. The dramatic history also shows that this was

² For example, Christopher Hodgkins states, "When the Commons had rejected a motion for suppressing the stage seven months earlier on February 4, there was still some hope of preventing armed conflict. . . . On August 22, Charles raised his banner at Nottingham, formally beginning hostilities. Fitful negotiations continued over the next two months, but war appeared inevitable." See *Centered on the Word: Literature, Scripture, and the Tudor-Stuart Middle Way*, eds. Daniel W. Doerksen and Christopher Hodgkins (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004), 301. Other similar explanations can be found in David Kastan's "Performance and Playbooks: The Closing of the Theatres and the Politics of Drama," *Reading, Society and Politics in Early Modern England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 171.

not the first time that public theaters had to close down. When contagious diseases such as plague broke out, or an occasion of mourning such as the death of Prince Henry plunged the whole nation into grief, theaters temporarily ceased their activities. Thus, given these historical circumstances, the contemporary readers were likely to view the order as a temporary measure for public safety and security rather than a public expression of anti-theatrical spirit.

The fact that the parliament was reluctant to close the theaters permanently also supports the view that the order was designed primarily for the prevention of dangerous public gatherings, for which playhouses had proved to be a likely venue in times past. The restrictions upon public theaters seemed to be relaxed after a few years, until the same parliament issued another order to retighten the restrictions. In 1647, for example, “the actors began their trade in quite an open and public manner – treating the ordinance of 1642 as a thoroughly dead letter” (Hotson 24). Possibly to stunt further acceleration of public gatherings, the House of Commons issued an order on 16 July that allowed “the Lord Mayor and the justices of the peace to take effectual Care speedily to suppress all publick Plays and Playhouses, and all Dancings on the Ropes” (Hotson 25). But despite the protests by a group of MPs (Manchester, Kent, Warwick, Pembroke, Mulgrave, and Howard) who wanted to ban stage plays permanently, this order closed public theaters for only six-months because of the intervention of the House of Lords (Hotson 25).

The conflicts within the parliament over the issue of closing theaters reveal the heterogeneity of the group. Although the majority of them can be considered Puritans in the sense that they endorsed the purification of church and worship practices³, each faction and sect in the parliament had different ideas as to cultural and political reforms. As Margot Heinemann argues, it was far from being true that “Parliamentary Puritans of every shade on the eve of the Civil War had been united in hatred of the theatre” (238). She adds to verify the claim, “Prynne, who really was a committed opponent of plays, was typical not so much of Parliamentary Puritanism as a whole, as of the most rigid and dogmatic Presbyterian section within it, with which both Cromwellian Independents and Levellers later came into political collision”(238). As a political assembly consisting of various competing factions, the Long Parliament could not afford to launch a cultural reform that didn’t already have a high level of confidence and cooperation among its members. On the other hand, it was relatively easy (and necessary) for the parliament to implement a series of safety measures against the possible threat to law and order, and the order to close theaters could be viewed as one of them.

³ It is well known that the term ‘puritans’ was originally invented to pejoratively designate a group of people whose Christian fervor was dangerous enough to pose a threat to the law and order. Even in the cases where the negative nuances are not involved, it remains open to subjective judgment who can be considered Puritans or not, since Christian piety and conscience, a usual measure to determine the identity, are differently understood and interpreted from one person to another. For the epistemological and historical problems in defining Puritans/Puritanism, see C. H. George, "Puritanism as History and Historiography," *Past & Present* 41 (1968):, 78-79. Margot Heinemann, *Puritanism and Theatre : Thomas Middleton and Opposition Drama under the Early Stuarts* (Cambridge Cambridgeshire ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 22.

The fact that dramatic activities gradually increased as the political situation started to stabilize during the Commonwealth period also indicates that the political circumstances played a more important role than Puritan doctrines in the control of theaters. For example, in 1651, *The Tragedy of the Famous Roman Orator* was published, “written for school performance”(Potter, “Plays” 295). Containing “a large number of roles for children” and “detailed stage directions” for performance, the play “praises republican Rome and figures like Brutus and Cassius”(Potter, “Plays” 295). The Cromwellian limited use of non-commercial dramatic activities is also found in the performance of Shirley’s *Cupid and Death* “before the Portuguese ambassador at Whitehall in March 1653,” and Thomas Jordan’s *Cupid Coronation* at a girls’ school in 1654 (Potter, “Plays” 296-97). In this sense, Sir William D’Avenant’s relatively well-known experiments with drama during this period can also be seen as one of the various attempts to redefine the role of drama in reformed England⁴. D’Avenant, who was once a staunch Royalist, turned his coat to serve Cromwellian power and was successful in staging a number of dramatic performances not only in his house (Rutland house) but also, after that initial success, at the Cockpit. To fit the taste of Puritan groups,

⁴ It should be noted that D’Avenant’s efforts to commercialize and popularize the court masques actually started in the Cromwellian period. During this time, D’Avenant not only submitted *A Proposition for Advancement of Moralities, By a new way of Entertainment of the People* (1653) to the Council of the State to justify the necessity and profits of the reformed stage as he envisioned it but also for the first time introduced women actors on English public stages and the use of a proscenium arch and painted canvasses, which later became the mainstream of Restoration drama. For a detailed analysis of D’Avenant’s dramatic discourse and his dramatic experiments during the Interregnum, see James R. Jacob, and Timothy Raylor, “Opera and Obedience: Thomas Hobbes and a Proposition for Advancement of Moraltie by Sir William Davenant,” *The Seventeenth Century* 6.2 (1991), 205-50.

D'Avenant changed the center of his drama from royal power to the Protestant military power of England. In *The Cruelty of the Spaniards in Peru* (1658), he celebrated the victory of England over Catholic powers and contrasted the goodwill of English people to the evil nature of the Spaniards. In the play, "English Souldiers" are presented as friends to "Peruvians," rescuing them from the tyranny of "the Spaniards," whereas the inhuman nature of the latter is graphically highlighted through violent scenes in which Spanish soldiers are "basting an Indian prince," and arousing "the hourrour of the Natives" through "the diversity of new torments" (D'Avenant, "Cruelty" 19-27). Furthermore, in view of the historical context, Davenant's demonization of the Spanish appears to have a specific political purpose. As Randall informs us, "as early as 1655 Cromwell had formulated a design to conquer Spanish possessions and trade in the Caribbean"(174). Spain in turn tried to destroy Cromwellian power by making "a treaty with the exiled Prince Charles." In April 1657, the welcome news that the English army had demolished the Spanish fleet at Santa Cruz reached England, and "in June 1658 the English, together with the French, defeated a Spanish army at the Battle of the Dunes" (174-75). It is against this historical background that Davenant wrote *The Cruelty of the Spaniards*, celebrating the military victory of English over Spain.

Although relatively less known, a story from Kent delivered through *Perfect Occurrences of the Parliament* in May 1645 gives another example of how the Puritan Parliament was not hesitant to use dramatic performances for its political and reformist agenda, when necessary. The newsbooks record approvingly a dramatic performance

orchestrated by Colonel Blunt, a parliamentary officer in Kent. The Colonel thought that the customary celebration of May Day was ungodly. People in Kent traditionally spent “May dayes” with “drinking matches, and May-Poles, and dancing and idle wayes” (V). As an alternative form of leisure that would replace the traditional, unwholesome practices of the celebration, he came up with the following event.

For on May day when they met, Colonell Blunt divided them into two parts, and the one was as Roundheads, and the other as Cavaliers, who did both of them act their parts exceeding well, and many people, men and women, young and old, were present to see the same.

The Roundheads they carried it on with care and love, temperance and order, and as much gravity as might be, every one party carefull in his action, which was so well performed, that it was much commented.

But the Cavaliers they minded drinking and roaring, and disorder, and would bee still playng with the women, and compasse them in, and quarrel, and were exceedingly disorderly.

And these had severall skirmishes one with the other, and took divers prisoners one from the other, and gave content to the Countrey people, and satisfied them as well as if they had gone a maying in an other way, which might have occasioned much evill after many wayes as it before declared.⁵

⁵ *Perfect Occurrences of Parliament*, 37, 9 May 1645, Vr, 4651023.44/E 260(37).

As a tool of education and propaganda, the dramatic performance seemed to receive no censure from the parliament. Instead, this local event through the media supported by the parliament managed to reach those outside the region.

The Politicization of Dramatic Discourse

So far, we have challenged the traditional interpretation of the order by looking at the internal evidence of the order and by testing it against other known facts and evidence. Although the parliament order of 1642 was not extraordinary in itself, it should be noted that the subsequent problematization of the event by polemic writers both Royalists and parliamentarians, inevitably catapulted its significance into something larger than it would otherwise have been. Martin Bulter's excellent study of Caroline drama, *Theater and Crisis*, can help us understand the course of this peculiar development. In *Theater and Crisis*, Butler argues against a common assumption that early modern drama "was protected and fostered by the court, reflected its values, and always strove for closer identification with it" (2). Contrary to this assumption, the professional playhouses during 1630s show "an independent, autonomous life of their own in comparison which their dependence [upon the court] were merely irregular" (101). Although the playhouses were not completely free from the power of the king and court because of censorship and regulation, Butler points out that "the vast bulk of the players' incomes came commercially, in their day-to-day playing in town; their services to the court, on the other hand, were principally seasonal, and centered on the Christmas months of November to February (and then usually on Tuesday and

Thursday), and were only sporadic thereafter” (101). Introducing Caroline dramatists such as Shirley, Brome, Nabbes, and Rowllins, who wrote largely for their theater audience instead of the court audience, Butler shows that their works exhibit strong interests in “serious and pressing issues” of the period and accommodate “opposition or puritan feeling” through covert and open disapproval of Laudism and King Charles’ personal rule without parliament (4). What was new with the 1642 parliament order and the subsequent attempts to control theatrical activities, in the view of Butler, was the replacement of the established opposition “between the court and the professional” (i.e. between the conservative and the reformatory) “with the formation of the “Cavalier-puritan divide” (283). In short, even though the order was primarily dictated by the pragmatic concern with potentially dangerous crowds, the polemical milieu of the civil war quickly made the parliament suppression of drama into an icon of cultural war between the parliament and the Royalists. The following example shows how the Royalist group looked upon the suppression of drama as a fitting opportunity to damage parliament’s authority.

Unless the houses take some speciall Order, Stage-playes will never down while the heavenly Buffones of the Presbyterie are in Action, all whose Sermons want nothing but Sence and Wit, to pass for perfect Comedies. And therefore seeing the houses condemn all Stage-players in an

Ordinance, to be prosecuted as common-Rogues at the Sessions, I see no reason why Rogues should be parted.⁶

Here, the boundaries between the houses of parliament and public theaters were deliberately collapsed to challenge the authority of parliament. The Royalists picture the houses of parliament as not different from public theaters, and their actions in the house were no better than comedies – pitiful comedies, perhaps, because they want ‘Sense and Wit.’ As long as the true Rogues (i.e. the parliamentary members) were not persecuted and dismissed, the Royalists sarcastically maintain that the ordinance against public theaters would never accomplish its goal.

While the passage is mainly concerned with the ridicule of parliament, *Mercurius Pragmaticus* seems to be excited at the stubborn resistance of players against the parliamentary order and seems to portray this resistance as a hopeful sign of their eventual victory over the parliament in the future. The unwavering popularity of the plays and people’s willingness to see them despite the parliament’s ordinance then became a favorite topic for the Royalist newsbooks to report and to be excited about. In the issue of January 1647/48, *Mercurius Elencticus* highlights the popularity of plays in contrast to the embarrassing low attendance for the public sermons by Puritan ministers such as Obadiah Sedgwick:

The Members are perplexed with the Play-houses: for since Orthodox Preaching was laid aside, the People find that they can edifie much more

⁶ *Mercurius Pragmaticus* 7, 26 October 1647, 50, 369.65/E 412(16).

in hearing one play, then twenty of their best Sermons. And truly I have heard some from the Mouths of their chastest Levites, that were stufft with more Ungodliness and Prophanation than any play I have every hear or read that so that where a dozen Coaches Tumble after Obadiah Sedgewick; Threescore are observed to wheele to the Cockpit, which is very offensive to the Brethren, which would seem to relish nothing but the Languag[e] of Canaan.⁷

More sophisticated and systematic attempts to capitalize on the popularity of plays and to establish a stronger symbiosis between drama and Royalist interests can be found in the new burgeoning market for printed drama. The Royalist publishers such as Humphrey Moseley and Humphrey Robinson saw and pursued potential lucrative returns in the publications of the dramatic works penned by Caroline playwrights such as Lodowick Carlell, William Cartwright, James Shirley, and Beaumont and Fletcher.⁸ The title pages of these playbooks deliberately exploited the nostalgic feeling toward the good old days of King Charles I's reign, assuring the readers that the play they bought is the same "as it was presented before the King and Queens Majesties at White-Hall, and very often at the Private House in Black-Friers, with great Applause." The Royalist sympathy and sentiments, which the publishers exploited for commercial success, were

⁷ *Mercurius Elencticus* 9, 26 January 1647, 66, 312.67/E 423(25).

⁸ As for Humphrey Moseley's royalist sympathies and Humphrey Robinson's partnership with him, see J. C. Reed, "Humphrey Moseley, publisher," *Oxford Bibliographical Society Proceedings and Papers*, 2 (1930), 55–142; L. Potter, *Secret rites and secret writing: royalist literature, 1641–1660* (1989), 19–22; L. B. Wright, 'The reading of plays during the puritan revolution', *Huntington Library Bulletin*, 6 (1934), 73–108 ; John Barnard, "London Publishing, 1640-1660: Crisis, Continuity, and Innovation," *Book History*, 4.2001: 8-9.

all the more strongly asserted and orchestrated when the monumental folio of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays was published in 1647. Beginning with the dedicatory verse signed by ten prominent King's men actors, including John Lowin and Joseph Taylor, the folio endeavors to create a simulacra of English stage, which is "now withered, and condemn'd, [. . .] to a long Winter and sterilitie" ("The Epistle Dedicatorie," sig. A2^v). Lamenting the fall of the current world from "the Silver and Golden age," in which Fletcher⁹ "the king of poet" "did raigin in Wits great empire," the chorus of poets in the commendatory verse universally faulted the uncontrolled desire of "the Envious" as the cause of "the wounded age" (sig. C2^r; F1^r; F4^v; G1^v).

Playes are as dead as He.

The Palate of this age gusts nothing High;

That has not Custard in't or Bawdery,

Folly and Madnesse fill the Stage: The Scæne

Is Athens; where, the Guilty, and the Meane,

9 The boundary and the nature of authorship endorsed by the commendatory verses can be confusing, thereby inviting further interpretative clarification. Out of thirty-seven poems, "only seven are addressed to both Beaumont and Fletcher together; twenty-three are addressed to Fletcher alone, without (or with merely momentary) reference to Beaumont" (Masten 123). Jeffrey Masten, in his book *Textual Intercourse*, thoroughly discusses the folio's "seeming vacillation between singular authorship and dual collaboration" (123). Masten analyses the paratext of Beaumont and Fletcher's folio and shows how the attempt to establish the singular authorship of Fletcher collides with an impulse to honor Beaumont and Fletcher's friendship and their collaborative writing practices. The confusing exchange of the singular pronoun 'he' with the plural 'they' betrays the wavering of the text between two different versions of authorship, Masten notes. Masten further argues that the folio marks the historical transition from collaborative to individual authorship (see pp.133-143). Because Masten's use of the folio as a prime example for the birth of individual authorship is not entirely convincing and, also, because my analysis of the folio is not concerned with Masten's idea of tension of individuality versus collectiveness, I decided not to draw a conceptual distinction of 'he' (Fletcher) as opposed to 'they' (Fletcher and Beaumont) in this chapter.

The Foole 'scapes well enough; Learned and Great,
Suffer an Ostracisme; stand Exulate. (sig. C1^r)

The prophetic voice that emerges from the commendatory verse, however, anticipates the end of this misrule in the resurrection of Fletcher and Beaumont. Taking advantage of the mythological language shared by Royalists, the commendatory verses invest Fletcher and Beaumont's plays with an aura of sanctity and boldly call them "sacred ashes," a "holy shrine," and a "temple" (sig. B4^v; F3^v; A4^v). While making an apologetic gesture for interrupting their sleep "among the holy shades and close," the poems describe their returning from death as a "miracle" of "resurrection," which will lead back "Nature" now "out of Tune; and Sick of Tumult and disorder" into her proper course (sig. B3^v; C3^r; G1^v; C1^r). In this way, the appearance of Beaumont and Fletcher in the printed pages is glorified as an eventual triumph of "natural wit" over "vulgar spirits"(sig. A3^v; B3^v) and a heroic achievement that deserves worldly fame and respect. Closing down theatres is no longer considered a threat to true wits since the printed plays will transform the world into a cosmic theatre upon which each reader performs his role.

What though distemper of the present Age,
Have banish'd your smooth numbers from the Stage?
You shall be gainersby't; it shall confer
To th' making the vast world your Theatre.
The Presse shall give to every man his part,
And we will all be Actors; learne by heart

These Tragic Scenes and ComickeStraines you writ,
 Un-imitable both for Art and Wit;
 And at each Exit, as your Fancies rise,
 Our hands shall clap deserved Plaudities. (sig. C2v)

The victory of art and wit over the present misrule is a poetic vision of the Cavaliers that sustained them through the “winter” of the civil war. The years around 1647, when this folio was published, were not a good time for King Charles and his followers. In 1645, Archbishop Laud was executed by the order of the parliament and the King’s army received a decisive defeat at Naseby, putting an end to Charles’s hopes of winning the war. In the following year, Oxford, with no military force for defense, easily fell in the hands of parliament, and King Charles surrendered to the Scottish army at Newark, leaving his future all the more uncertain and insecure.¹⁰ The more unkind and threatening the real world was to the Royalists, the more eager they seemed to commemorate an interiorized cultural tradition of drama to help them walk through the parliamentary night together. In the collective imagination of the Royalists, Beaumont and Fletcher’s friendship and their dramatic world became a spiritual relic, something that Royalist could enact sacramentally on the safe stage of their minds until the end of their sufferings.

As briefly sketched above, the printing market for Caroline plays deliberately took advantage of the nostalgia and idealization of a past in which King Charles and his

¹⁰ G. E. Seel, *The English Wars and Republic, 1637-1660* (London; New York: Routledge, 1999), 31, 49.

courtiers still had political power over the parliament. But we know that King Charles' rule without parliament was not as rosy and peaceable as sung by the Royalists in their writings.¹¹ Without due consideration of the polemical milieu and propagandistic energies in which these writings were produced and circulated at that time, literary historians are likely to misread what was written and argued as objective and reliable.¹² The claims by the Royalists about drama, in a similar sense, need to be read skeptically. In their nostalgic representation of the good old days, the Royalists conveniently forgot the dissident and critical voices against the church and the state expressed through dramatic form during Charles's rule. They represented themselves as the defenders of art and drama and characterized the civil war, for their own polemic purpose, as the misrule of the vulgar.¹³ In their inner landscape, the closing of public theaters by the Long Parliament became another violent destruction of art, comparable to the pulling down of "painted glass in Canterbury Cathedral" (Guibbory 93) and the Cheapside Cross, whereas the poverty of actors and the misery of public playhouses became an emotional

¹¹ Lois Potter gives well-selected examples of the royalist writings, which lament the cultural degeneration after the war and were "now longing for a return to the old ways" (27). See for example his reading of *Ad Populum, or, a Lecture to the People* (1644) and of *Loyal Song of the Royal Feast* (1647) in pp. 26-8.

¹² The conventional image of radical Puritans during the English civil wars can be one example. Radicals such as the Ranters and the Levellers have been traditionally imagined to be 'illiterate mechanick persons' as claimed by the Anglican polemicist Thomas Edwards in *Gangraena* (1646). But as Nicholas McDowell's recent study of the radical movement of the civil wars convincingly illustrates, many of the leaders of the radical groups were actually highly educated enough to display in their polemical pamphlets their humanist education and learning. For more detail see pp.1-49 in Nicholas McDowell, *The English Radical Imagination: Culture, Religion, and Revolution, 1630-1660*, (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

¹³ For the evidence of the increased number of clashes especially during the 1630s between the Caroline censors and the professional theaters over the social issues such as heavy taxes, ship money, and King Charles' personal rule, see pp. 477-78 in Butler's *Theatre and Crisis*; p. 302 in Hodgkins' "Plays out of Season"; p.201 in Heinemann's *Puritanism and Theatre*.

scene, a rallying point which enabled them to forge their collective identity as the Royalists.

While Royalists embraced drama as one of the icons of their cultural identity, the parliament fought back against Royalist predilection toward theatrical performances and described it as a visible sign for the corruption of court. Consider the following example in which the parliament newsbook reports the performance of masque on Sabbath's day to suggest the spiritual depravity of the Cavaliers.

... in time they [the Cavaliers] will go neere to put down all preaching and praying, and have some religious Masque or play instead of Morning and Evening Prayer; it has been an old fashion at Court, amongst the Protestant there, to shut up the Sabbath with some wholesome Piece of Ben Johnson or Davenant, a kind of Comickall Divinity.¹⁴

In a casual glance, the puritan parliament's criticism of royal masques can be seen as evidence of their biases against drama. But as I will explain in detail in the analysis of Caroline court masques and its cultural milieu in the second chapter, it should be noted that the criticism of masques during the 1630s and 1640s was largely intended as part of the broader polemic strategy to discredit the reputation of Caroline court culture. Newsbooks and pamphlets during the period often reported the performance of masque to criticize the Royalists' mindless consumption of wealth even in the middle of war and national grief and to highlight their predilection for the immoral and ungodly. Listing

¹⁴ *Mercurius Britanicus*, 12, 9 November 1647, 89, 286.13/E75 (38).

the corruptions of the court tracing back to the times of King James, the author of *The Spectacles* (1644) does not forget to mention masques with an emphasis on its foreignness:

I am sure, that when the Queen [Henrietta Maria] came over first, she cared for nothing but playing with little Dogges, and Dwarfes, and Masquing, Dancing, revelling; the worst that could be made of the Court (yes, and the best too) it was but a Scene of Voluptuousnesse, a Stage of Luxuries and Pride.¹⁵

It is noticeable that masque, instead of being primarily identified as a dramatic event, was lumped together with other foolish amusement and vanity of the court life to question the authority of Queen Henrietta Maria. It serves as a nice vantage point from which to anatomize the corruptions of the royal court¹⁶ including the growing influence of Catholic culture and tradition as supported and channeled through the queen Henrietta Maria. Taking advantage of the fear of Catholic conspiracy and of the military attacks from Catholic nations, the pamphlet writers sympathetic to the parliament cause were effectively able to justify their criticism of royal masques.

So far, I've attempted to challenge the conventional understanding of the 1642 parliamentary order as an explicit manifestation of Puritans' hatred of drama on moral and doctrinal grounds. I suggest an alternative possibility of understanding the order as a

¹⁵ *The Second part of the spectacles, or, Rather a Multiplying Glass*, (London: 1644), 7.

¹⁶ For the detailed analysis of "the cultural stereotypes of Court (corrupt, effeminate, Popish, tyrannical)," see David Underdown, *Revel, Riot and Rebellion* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 127-31.

temporary measure in the time of political crisis to tighten national security and to control the potentially dangerous masses. I also attempt to read more critically the Royalists' deliberate presentation of themselves as a group of people who loved art and literature. As the example of the 1647 Beaumont and Fletcher Folio shows, the Royalists' self-fashioning act to define themselves as the champions of literature and drama needs to be taken critically because their nostalgic glance on the world before the civil war creates a false impression that the Royalists were always on the side of arts and literature, while their political opponents were not. As Butler's and other scholars' recent studies show, the Royalists' love of art and drama was greatly exaggerated in the same way the Puritans' hatred of drama was. The court was only one of many cultural sources that sustained the theatrical world in the Caroline period, and was often times at odds with professional dramatists and actors, especially in the 1630s over their dramatic treatment of sensitive social issues such as ship money and Charles' personal rule. In a similar way, although there were notable Puritans (e.g. John Stockwood, William Perkins, and William Prynne) who were outspoken opponents of drama during the time, it should be emphasized that these individuals were far from representing the overall Puritan culture and reformation movement of the middle seventeenth century. The Puritan groups, unlike what their contemporary opponents portrayed them to be, did not often exhibit explicit hatred against theatricality and drama¹⁷. Instead, they displayed no

¹⁷ Kastan notes, for example, "sermons were preached against plays and play-goers in each of the last four years of the 1570s - that is, the years immediately following the erection of the theatre in Shoreditch - but none of the Paul's Cross sermons published between 1630 and 1642 mentioned the theatre or theatre-going among London's proliferating vices" (169). Other

particular fear of using it for the purpose of education and propaganda, and when they criticized royal masques and courtly performances, their censure seemed to be directed at the ungodly and popish practices sheltered in the royal court rather than theatricality per se.

B. Theatricality and Cheap Print

Intermission: Displacement of Theatrical Energy

In the previous section we've examined how the traditional idea of Puritans as fundamentally opposed to the theater and theatrical displays obscures the subtler meanings of the 1642 parliamentary order and its aftermath. Looking at the closing of public theaters as part of the Puritan campaigns against idolatry is certainly plausible, but it tends to underestimate dialogic, sometimes antagonistic relations between parliamentary members. MPs were largely united against the personal rule of Charles, but when it came to religious practices and principles such as infant baptism, they held different views and ideas, which made it difficult to use a single religious principle as a catalyst for political action. As I discussed earlier, closing public theaters by the parliament in 1642 can be better explained as a concern with public gatherings, and the subsequent behavior of the parliament and of Puritan groups showed that their attitude

supporting evidence about the neutral position of the parliament on commercial theaters can be inferred from the reading of *The Actors Remonstrance* (1643). The anonymous writer of the pamphlet complained about the actors' "grievances for their restraint" after the 1642 parliamentary order and vowed in lieu of actors to reform their plays. It is hard to imagine that the writer wrote this pamphlet without the possibility that the parliament might change their mind to bring professional stages back to life again.

toward drama was highly malleable in light of the particular polemical circumstances and contexts in which theatrical events and activities took place.

With that argument granted, however, the traditional view of the English civil wars and the Interregnum as one of the low points of early modern drama still remains unchallenged. Regardless of political motives of the parliament that led to the closing of public theaters, it seemed an unshakable fact that major public playhouses were demolished, and the professional actors and playwrights were driven away to find other means of living. Although the actors who refused to leave the stage were able to offer some performances, their professional practices were naturally restricted and guarded due to the increased possibility of being arrested and jailed. It is also true that drolls, closet dramas, and printed playbooks still survived or even thrived to satisfy the appetite of audiences for dramatic performances. But even here these cultural activities appeared feeble attempts or imperfect substitutes to fill the vacancies of professional theaters at its best, not least because the very popularity of these dramatic pieces was primarily caused by the suppression of professional theaters by the political authorities.

One possible way to look at the English Civil War years and the Interregnum as an exciting period for the development of drama is to explore the ways in which the displacement of ‘theatrical energy’ helped create the most distinguishable cultural products of the time – pamphlets and newsbooks. The term ‘theatrical energy’ here is chosen to echo the term ‘social energy,’ which Greenblatt introduced in *Shakespearean Negotiation*. Social energy, according to Greenblatt, defies easy identification: it can be

identified “only indirectly, by its effects” (6). Among its effects are emotional responses the audience exhibited at the time of attending cultural events, “such as disquiet, pain, fear, the beating of the heart, pity, laughter, tension, relief and wonder” (6). In Greenblatt’s view, social energy is manifested not only across time but also across space. Diachronically, it ensures passing down of a cultural legacy from one generation to another through works of art. Even though the original cultural and social setting for the cultural artifacts vanished long time ago, the social energy concentrated and “encoded in certain works of arts,” Greenblatt argues, continues to exert its influence upon modern viewers by generating “the illusion of life for centuries” (7). Greenblatt also uses this same concept syntactically to explain the exchanges of semiotic and material resources from one cultural sphere to another. Exchanges between one cultural area and another in the Renaissance occurred on numerous levels. Not only “ordinary language but also metaphors, ceremonies, dances, emblems, items of clothing, well-worn stories” were transferred “from one culturally demarcated zone to another” (7).

The term “social energy” is advantageous in the critical analysis of drama history because the concept, instead of treating cultural artifacts as being autonomous and unhinged from other social interactions, highlights the “in-betweenness” of drama and the outside world. In one sense, Greenblatt seems to modify and adapt the dynamics of individual psychology which Freud explored through the notion of libido. Just as libido can displace onto another part of the body, when the original receptacle is not available, the cultural sites of social energy and the boundaries between them can be altered and

reshaped according to the historical and political circumstances. The depiction of cultural practices in terms of displacement and energy can be a powerful theoretical tool when we grapple with the significance of the 1642 parliamentary order. Instead of focusing on the destructive changes and losses in the domain of drama after the interdiction, it directs our attention to the ways in which the resources and energy once stored in the domain of public theaters migrates to the neighboring cultural fields. In this section, I will explore the dynamic development of the polemic literature during the civil wars and how the pamphlet wars not only exploits theatre and its energy and resources but also contributes to the structural formation of theatricality itself.

At first glance, it appears that the surge of pamphlet publications and the closing of public theaters do not connect in any causal relationship. As often described in the historical accounts of the English civil war, the former appeared to have involuntarily happened after the collapse of state censorship, whereas the latter was the result of the parliament's active intervention, regardless of the political motivations behind it. But as later pages will show, the sudden expansion of cheap print cannot be entirely attributed to the collapse of the Star Chamber alone. The parliament took an active role in creating a political environment amenable to the textual exchange of political ideas in print, an active role similar to their action suppressing public theaters. If concern over uncontrolled public gatherings led the parliament to close down theaters, the necessity of appealing to the wider audience in an ideological fight with the Royalists encouraged them to exploit the disseminating power of print. Of course, the parliament alone was

not responsible for creating the polemic culture during the 1640s. As this section will show in more detail, other social and religious groups began to participate in the polemic war and find ways in which to appeal to the reading public to further their political or religious agendas. Just as the growing competition led the commercial theaters to invent new dramatic techniques and skills, the intense polemic war created a competitive environment that pressured the pamphleteers and newsbook writers to make their writings more appealing to their potential readers. One of the common ways to appeal to less educated readers was to duplicate the dramatic experience that the playhouses used to provide before the civil war. In this sense, the dramatic experience mediated through cheap print filled in the vacancy created by the closing of public theaters and assumed a similar role in the cultural field that commercial theaters had previously done. However, what is important in light of our argument is that duplicating a dramatic experience during the polemic war was achieved in radically different cultural settings and constraints and through the use of different media and material. The first part of the following discussion will survey the historical development of this polemic culture with an emphasis on the role of the parliament in order to show how the polemic environment fostered the new type of theatricality mediated through cheap print. The second part will analyze selected examples from the pamphlet plays (the playlets) and the newsbooks that illustrate a different mode of theatricality. For convenience, the dramatic aspects of playlets will be addressed prior to the discussion of newsbooks because the dramatic components of the former were more easily recognizable and understandable. During

this process, it will become clear that theatrical energy newly coupled with print culture produces quite a different type of dramatic experience from that available in traditional cultural forms, not only collapsing the boundaries between readerly experience and dramatic experience but also reshaping the dynamic in dramatic experience between the real and the imaginary.

The Polemic Culture during the English Civil Wars

In early 1641, when the Star Chamber, which had been in charge of censorship over printed materials, collapsed as a result of the upset between the parliamentary group and the Royalists, an unprecedented number of pamphlets poured out into the streets.¹⁸ The comparison of the numbers of printed materials before and after censorship collapse shows how significant this change was. In 1600, when the state's control of publications was still in place, "the output of the English press was 259 separate items." But "by 1642, that figure exploded to 2,968, a more than tenfold increase" (Achinstein, "Texts" 51). The book seller George Thomason avidly collected pamphlets during the civil war time, and his collection amounted to more than 22,000 separate items from 1640 to 1661, enabling us to understand how vital pamphlet writings had been in the course of the

¹⁸ For a detailed process of the censorship breakdown see Michael Mendle, "Grub Street and Parliament," *Media and Revolution* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995), 32-34. For the accounts about the explosive growth of printed materials during the civil wars, see Harold Weber, *Paper Bullets : Print and Kingship under Charles II* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996), 5.; David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 47. For the functional literacy of the vernacular readers during early modern times , see Heidi Hackel Brayman, *Reading Material in Early Modern England: Print, Gender, and Literacy* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 55-68.

ideological and cultural war.¹⁹ Different from other forms of writings such as religious and legal treatises, conduct books and memoirs, these pamphlets typically run only seven to ten pages, which made it easy for even people with a low literacy level to read them at one sitting. The writing style was also inviting for more common readers with lesser levels of literacy. Written in easy prose and stripped of learned allusions and classical ornaments only available to the elite groups, pamphlets were consciously designed for a popular audience. Joad Raymond characterizes this pamphlet audience of the mid-seventeenth century in the following way:

The ability to read print was more common than the ability to read manuscript and the ability to write, and it was this model of literacy that provided the foundation for pamphlet culture. The many tradesmen, craftsmen and even artisans who lived in London and were able to read became the new patrons of cheap print. Many pamphlets and plays addressed particular attention to apprentices. In London the audience for cheap print was socially diverse, and extended to those whose involvement in the workplace or religious community allowed them to hear texts they could not read themselves.²⁰

The emergence of a wider reading public marks a significant change in the mechanism of politics. Before the civil wars, according to David Zaret, the exchange of political

¹⁹ For more details about the Thomason Collection see Lois Potter, *Secret Rites and Secret Writing*, 2-3.

²⁰ Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge Press, 2003), 91.

and religious ideas was “severely restricted by norms of secrecy and privilege, confined mostly to discussion among local and national elites” (7). MPs could enjoy “a customary right of free speech” in parliament but “disclosure of parliamentary debates was a crime” (Zaret 7). Of course, Elizabethan and Stuart monarchs sometimes “used declarations in order to explain and justify policy decisions, not least foreign wars, and it became common to issue explanations of parliamentary dissolutions” (Peacey 32). But the publication of these writings was occasional and carefully circumscribed only when political matters were grave and the authorities considered it necessary to engage with the public for the prevention of potential dangers.²¹

Once the tight control of printed materials slackened in the moment of the political vacuum, the printing presses started to actively affect political debate and decision-making, especially concerning the wars. Exploiting people’s hunger for news and their worries about the war situation, the pamphlets and the newsbooks did not simply report or deliver what had been told and discussed in the parliament or what was happening in the battle fields and other areas of England. In the case of the “Irish rebellion of 1641,” for example, the pamphlets and the newsbooks actively magnified the fear of a “popish plot” and “allegations of a connection between Charles I and the Irish rebels” (Shagan 23). These writings usually emphasized graphic violence,

²¹ For detailed analysis of King Charles’s repressive measures against “public discussion,” see Joad Raymond, “Outbreak of the English Newsbook,” *The Invention of Newspaper* (Oxford University Press, 1996), 98-99.

especially against women and children in order to sway the audience's emotions.²² The following is one of many such examples:

Others of the Rebels marched to Armagh the same night: for they are running Camp scattered up and down the Country, which Towne they presently tooke, and burned the same night also, which was a Towne full of rich Marchants, both English and Scottish, whom they murdered in a most cruell and bloody manner, with their wives and children: first deflowring many of the women, then cruelly murdering them, and pulling them about the street by the haire of the head, and dashing their childrens brains out against the post and stones in the street, and so running with them from place to place, saying, that those were the pigs of the English sowes.²³

Written in simple language, highlighting sensational events and graphic descriptions of violence, the pamphlets during the time endeavored to stir people's minds and encouraged them to take action for the protection of their family, religion, and nation. In regard to the rapid growth of polemical writings, the political authorities, especially

²² For the impact of "the Irish rebellion" upon the development of newsbook, see Joad Raymond, *The Invention of Newspaper*, 115-116. For more detailed examples and analysis of polemical rhetoric used by pamphleteers at the event of Irish rebellion, see Ethan Shagan, "Construction Discord," *The Journal of British Studies*, 36.1: 1997, 4-34. For the role of parliamentary printers such as John Thomas and Joseph Hunscomb in the publishing of pamphlets "concerning the state of the rebellion in Ireland," see Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers*, 240-41.

²³ James Salmon, *Bloudy News from Ireland*, (London: 1641), sig. A3v.

parliament, exhibited an ambivalent attitude toward them. On the official level, parliament repeated expression of concerns about “the licentious Printing of Pamphlets”²⁴ and tightened the control of publication by passing special orders in August 1642, June 1643, September 1647, and October 1649.²⁵ The repeated revisions by parliament of the licensing practices could indicate that the traditional logistics of control were less effective in solving the problems (Potter 4; Mendle 41). Indeed, the imprimatur to distinguish authorized prints from others could be easily forged (Peacey 147), and the licensing power limited to the mere “twenty” members in the Stationer’s company did not reflect the increasingly complicated mechanism of publishing and printing, and only created discontents among other free men and apprentices with less opportunity. The growing number of apprentices and freedmen in the company over years, combined with “a considerable new human infrastructure of female and male hawkers, writers, and print-interlopers,” fueled the impulses of the less advantaged group to risk the punishments of being caught for better rewards (Mendle 42). But describing parliament as single-handedly committed to the control of unruly publishers and printers can be misleading because parliamentary leaders, when necessary, were not hesitant to sensitize the public through the circulation of propaganda. In a similar way

²⁴ *Commons Journal*, 2:319. On 18 November 1642, the house of Commons ordered: “That the Committee for Printing, where Sir Edward Deering has the Chair, do meet Tomorrow at Seven of Clock, in the inner Star-Chamber; and do take some speedy Course for the Preventing the Great Abuses that happen by the licentious Printing of Pamphlets; and especially, that they take care to suppress the Printing, or Venting in Manuscript, the diurnal Occurrences of Parliament”.

²⁵ Lois Potter, *Secret Rites and Secret Writing*, 4; Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers*, 132-62. As for legal control upon news trade during Charles’ reign, see Susan Wiseman, *Drama and Politics in the English Civil War*, (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 24.

that the parliament, if necessary, used dramatic performances in order to promote their political and cultural reforms, its leaders exploited cheap print and its potential as a medium for mobilizing people on urgent political issues.

Unlike King Charles and his advisors who wanted to handle political problems within the bounds of traditional custom and practices, the Long Parliament sought a different way of accomplishing its goals by taking full advantage of the incomparable disseminating power of prints and publications (Peacey 37). The Grand Remonstrance of December 1641 is one good example. Frustrated at the lack of attention King Charles was showing to urgent political and religious issues, the parliament decided to garner public support by “printing and distributing the ‘grand remonstrance’” (Peacey 37). The publishing of the ‘remonstrance’ was scandalous to at least one MP. Sir Edward Daring said, “When I first heard of a remonstrance, I imagined like faithful councillors we should hold a glass up to his Majesty . . . I did not dream that we should remonstrate downward, tell stories to the people, and talk of the king as of a third person” (qtd. in Peacey 37). Instead of humbly petitioning the King in person with their grievances, the parliament sent them to print in order to appeal to the public and thereby to create pressure on King Charles not to ignore their complaints any more.²⁶ Of course, as other well-known examples (e.g. publishing King Charles’s letters in 1645 and the history of

²⁶ Joad Raymond made a similar remarks upon the signification of the Grand Remonstrance: “The remonstrance indicated an innovation in strategy, . . . , not only in the terms which it outlined the king’s policies, but in that it addressed not the object of its reproach, but the people” (*The Invention of the Newspaper*, 122).

the parliament in 1647) show,²⁷ using prints to shout rather than silence the current political issues and struggles was one of the common theatrical tactics that parliament used throughout the course of war to accomplish its political objectives. In this sense, the parliament's official pledge to suppress polemic tracts and pamphlets should not be taken at face value. The suppression of unauthorized pamphlets and newsbook was very selective and largely reactive in nature.²⁸ The parliament did not hesitate to hire its own pamphleteers, when necessary, such as Henry Parker and Thomas May, to condemn "the root of all this mischief" ("The Grand Remonstrance" 206) and to encourage people to join and fight under the flag of parliament.

Although it was the parliament that initially took a lead in transforming print into an arena of public debate, other competing social and religious groups soon joined in the polemic war and started to use print as a medium for their radical ideas. The Levellers, who based their power in the New Model Army, "campaign[ed] for a new social contract between the people, understood as male heads of households, and their elected representatives, directly accountable in fixed-term Parliament" (Davies 29). The Diggers went a step further to advocate a utopian vision of classless society by insisting that for free use of everyone "the earth [should be] set free from all kingly bondage of lords of

²⁷Michael Mendle. *Henry Parker and the English Civil War*, (Cambridge [England]: New York : Cambridge University Press, 1995) , 25-6; Richardson, R. C Ricardson, *The Debate on the English Revolution* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), 9;

²⁸ Pointedly reminding that Sir Edward Deering, who was sitting in 1641 as a chair of the Committee for Printing, was "himself a repeated offender against the ordinances restricting the printing of parliamentary materials," Joad Raymond argues, "we must not take too seriously the strictures of MPs against publication and printing: objections were only raised when convenient" (*The Invention of the Newspaper*, 104-5).

manors and oppressing landlords” (Winstanley 23).²⁹ As ideological clashes got louder, Royalists also changed their tactics of detachment and started to engage actively the print war. John Cleveland and John Taylor were among many who utilized their fiery rhetoric to show that Royalists could also be good at mud-slinging and name-calling.³⁰ Royalists also set up the printing presses based in Oxford and used their own network of distribution to more effectively fight parliament propaganda by delivering on a daily basis “Truth impartially related” in the form of newspapers.

Playlets and Newsbooks – Emergence of New Theatricality

In an intense polemic war, the polemic writers had to find a way to attract a wider audience and to win their minds. One of the ways in which they achieved this goal was to duplicate the dramatic experience that had been offered by the public theaters before the war. Reflecting and transforming everyday life into a form of entertainment, drama was arguably the most popular literary genre in early modern times. Though not completely liberated from church or state patronage, professional theaters in early modern times were a unique development resulting from the urbanization of London as well as the enlargement of its commercial sectors. Located at the outskirts of London called “the liberties,” professional theaters offered daily entertainments to London

²⁹ For Marxist analysis of the radicals during the civil wars, see Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down* (New York: Penguin, 1972), 107-50. As for the literary analysis of their leading polemicists such as Lilburne, Winstanley, Coppe, see Thoams N. Corns, *Uncloistered Virtue*, 129-193.

³⁰ For detailed analysis of John Cleveland’s writing styles and his role in polemical writings see James Loxley, *Royalism and Poetry in the English Civil Wars* (New York: St. Martin’s Press), 88-91; Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper*, 222-225.

citizens and visitors.³¹ Unlike the Medieval times, when theatrical performances still remained occasional and religious events, tightly controlled by the power of regional guilds and civic authorities, Renaissance theaters were launched as commercial enterprises whose fate largely depended on the number of audience members– or consumers- coming to the places for the shows.³² Thus, in order to survive the stiff competition in the market, they had to be sensitive and adaptive to the demands of the urban consumers and their –sometimes unconscious- wishes. While watching a drama of their own choice, the playgoers could enjoy not only the spectacular display of wealth and power but also vent the frustrations in their lives through the vicarious identification with the fictional figures representing social inferiors (e.g. widows, mechanics, servants). Of course, the contents of the theater were not always subversive. They were at times informative and educational, helping the theater-goers to identify and interiorize social norms and values. By watching the city life of London on the stage, for example, both Londoners and visitors were better informed of the potential risks and benefits of living in London. In *Theater of a City*, which explores “the intimate synergy . . . operating between London and the early modern commercial theater “(2), Jean Howard writes:

London was not necessarily transparent to those who lived there.

Demographic growth, physical expansion, high death rates, and

high in-migration meant that the city was opaque and unfamiliar

³¹ R.A. Foakes, “Playhouses and Players,” *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2-3.

³² William Tydeman, “An Introduction to Medieval English Theatre,” *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre*, Ed. Richard Beadle (Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1-4;

to many of its inhabitants. The theater helped to make sense of city life.³³

If everyday early modern London life was confusing and challenging, everyday life during a civil war would have been all the more so. People needed sources of information with which to map out the development of political and social issues, to tell enemies from friends, and to position themselves in the current military and state affairs. If dramatic contents on the part of writers increased a possibility of widening their readers, the same cultural form on the part of the audience, especially less educated people, allowed them to know about the cultural and political issues at stake. In a time when public theaters were closed by the parliamentary order, pamphlet plays (playlets) filled the missing role by presenting the national crisis in a dramatic form.

The play pamphleteers during the civil wars were using traditional dramatic components such as plot, character, and dialogue to hold the attention of readers and to influence their minds in a desired direction. Playlets (play pamphlets), however, need to be distinguished from published plays. They were a typical hybrid form, combining the features of news, dialogue, and drama. “Drawing on the popular form of the Lucianic, in which any figure may talk to any other,” pamphlet plays “invited audiences to understand them as plays and as news” (Wiseman 70). The anonymous playlet *The Last News in London* (1642), for example, stages (or from a journalism viewpoint reports) the meeting of two typical social types, a countryman and a citizen, who “did ride betwixt

³³ Jean Howard, *Theater of a City : The Places of London Comedy, 1598-1642* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 12.

London and Ludlow, October 12. 1642” (front page). The citizen coming from London assumes a role of intelligencer by answering the questions of the “poor simple country man,” who shows an insatiable hunger for news. By exploiting the stereotypical associations with countrymen and citizens, the playlet makes the characters and their contrasting attitudes toward the authority of kingship more acceptable to the readers. The following passage shows how *The Last News in London* uses the naive –but intuitive- thought of a countryman to criticize the recent happenings in London.

Country[man]: . . . but I pray, have you no other news stirring with you.

Cit[izen]: O yes, did you not heare of the Guild Hall night worke.

Count: What was that I pray, do they work in the night?

Cit: No, no, they playd all night.

Count: Why, I thought that playes & play-house had been put downe:

Cit: Yes so they were in the Suburbes, but they were set up in the City,
and Guildhall is made a Play-house.

Count: But I pray, what Play was it that was Acted?

Cit: In troth, I cannot well tell, I saw it not I thank God; there were none
but great ones there: the Marshall that kept the door would let no
honest men come in.

Count: But could you by no means hear the name of it?

Cit: Some say it was called a King or no King, or King Careo, but they
say that Skippon was so frighted at the sight of him, that he left his

seat, what would he have done think yon, if he had seen the King
indeed:

Count: Truly it was a strange play, did not they whisper Treason in it? on
my word we Country folks dare not be so bold as to make sport at
Kings, the very name of King (me thinks) carries such a majestic sound
with it, as that it makes the Auditors amazed to heare it, and dare your
Citizens be so bold.

Cit: Fie fie, what do you talke what dare they not doe? Citizens and
Players may do anything, you poore simple country men are afraid,
like the Froggs in the fable, to come neere your King, the Citizens they
can insult and leape upon him.³⁴

“Published only eleven days before the Battle of Edgehill” (Lesser 947), the playlet metaphorically depicts a public gathering at Guildhall, perhaps part of preparation for war against King Charles, as a play. Referring to a public gathering supportive of the parliamentary cause as a theatrical event can be read ironically, because, as the countryman reminds us, “playes & play-house” after all by the parliamentary order “had been put downe.” The playlet continues to make fun of the distinction between the profane and the godly and the real and the imaginary, which Puritan groups might have considered crucial to maintain, by using a pun on the words “pray” and “play” and by echoing Beaumont and Fletcher’s well known play *A King and No King*. The

³⁴ *The Last News in London, or a Discourse Between a Citizen and a Countrey Gentleman* (London: 1642), 2-3.

countryman's naïve responses stifle the allegorical dimension of this scene, but they help make him appear less threatening and adversarial in comparison to the "Citizens and players" at the Guildhall who "can insult and leape upon" their king.

Positioning itself at the intersection of news and drama, *The Last News in London* demonstrates how dramatic elements add the power of persuasion. Instead of forcing the readers to engage in abstract debates, playlets make the most of familiar metaphors and likeable characters so that readers, without expert knowledge of the subject, can judge – or they think they can- the right from the wrong. Many of playlets during the timewere explicitly committed to a specific political and religious stance instead of trying to maintain a neutral and indifferent position in regard to the subject being reported. *Hampton-Court Conspiracy* (1647), for example, mobilizes a fear of the assassination of King Charles held captive in Hampton-court and harangues the readers into hatred of the "Agitators and Levellers" by claiming that they are not only responsible for this horrible plot but also worked as constant, destructive forces to the fabrics of English kingdom and its time-honored traditions and customs.

T.S...: . .what is the kingdome now but a Tenniscourt, and his Majesty the ball banded about with the rougish rack[e]t of roundheadism, and often hazarded to destruction; looke from *Dan to Bersheba [Beershaba]*, and you shall see such tossing the Independent petticoats for free quarter, and such tosse potting to credit the Publick Faith; that doubtles [doubles?] shortly all

things must be common, and then this last age shall be exalted
 above the first because of hornes, and Cuckolds will be a
 custome if not cannonicall.³⁵

Hampton-Court Conspiracy, though packed with biting phrases and sensational language, is relatively simple in the use of dramatic dialogue. The two characters in the playlet (A.B., T.S.) mimic the relationship between a news provider and a reader. A.B. does not speak much except to ask a few questions about the agitators and levellers, whereas T.S. fills the pages with his detailed information about them, strongly colored by his Royalist agenda and prejudices.

The readers of playlet, however, are not always able to identify the writer's intentions as quickly as those in *Hampton-Court Conspiracy*. *The Soldiers Language* (1644) features two Royalist soldiers (Jeffrey and Nicholas), but instead of employing them as a mouthpiece of Royalism, the writer has them complain about the moral degradation of the Royalists, especially their military leaders.

Je[ffrey]: . . . But to the matter concerning Captains, many of them
 behave them so womanish, that is probably they were born under
 Venus, not Mars, and I think a Fan in the hand will better become
 them than a Feather in the Cap.

Nic[olas]: But how shall we know Captains from other Officers?

Je: By their Scarfs, not by their fears, skill, or courage; yet many when

³⁵ *The Hampton Court Conspiracy* (London: 1647), 6.

necessitie forceth, fight courageously, but tis with a Sow, to have some roome with her pigs, when the Enemie gives the onset: but ere the Field is won, he takes two or three pigs (prisoners I should say) away with him; but in my conceit, Holborn (I mean a hay-barn) had been a more excellent shelter for him, then a piggs-coat. But what say you to a wise Captain, that got on a maids petticoat instead of armour of proof, in the time of the battell, when his Souldiers were fighting to shelter himself from the violence of the enemie?³⁶

The “royalist soldier” Jeffrey here confirms rather refutes the stereotypical image of the Cavalier during the time -- a libertine whose sexual appetite was as insatiable as his obsession with physical looks. To make these two Royalists’ personal experience more believable, the author makes sure that they were not free from Cavalier behavior that they find faults with their military superiors. In the opening conversation, Nicholas’ abusive words to the first met Jeffrey reveal him as a typical cavalier, who is “profane, violent, high handed’ (Wiseman 33): “God damne me, but Ile run my Rapier thorow thee [Jeffrey], if thou stand vexing me thus; and I am in haste” (A1^r). In this way, by letting the readers imagine themselves within an earshot of the private conversation between two Royalists, *The Soldiers Language* is more effectively able to take advantage of the curiosities of the readers and to steer them away from Royalist military campaigns.

³⁶ *The Souldiers Language or a Discourse Between Two Souldiers* (London: 1644), sig. A3^r.

Although play pamphlets, due to the restriction of space, usually have only two characters/speakers, some of them allow more than three to appear in print, creating more intricate exchanges of dialogues and thoughts among them. *The Arraignment of Superstition* (1641) is one example to show how adding a third voice can bring more twists and turns to the story. The story of this play is set in an unnamed church where “the good minde of the Protestant, the Indifference of the Glasier, and the puritie and zeale of the Separatist” were looking at the Stained glass adorning the building. The concrete physicality of the dialogue between the three characters is skillfully maintained by the use of sensory verbs and demonstrative pronouns. In the beginning, the Protestant was on the side of Separatist, who argued that “these popish windowes” should be downe” because “they doe but barre the light/ The Lord hath sent, and trouble much our sight/ That scarce at noone day we can see to read/ The holy Bible for the paint and lead” (A2^f). But as the debate gets heated, the Protestant eventually changes his mind and ends up supporting the view of Glasier. The turning point of his decision appears natural rather than forced because it is represented to take place in a casual conversation about the painting of Queen Elizabeth that happened to be in the church building.

Protestant: See here’s the picture of our Gracious Queene

Elizabeth of famous memory,

Which picture is in many Churches sense,

As a memoriall to eternities:

It is no Idoll, yet by mortall hands,

‘Tis marv’le your zeale will suffer it to stand.

Separatist: Sir, that’s a picture that may well deserve

(For that the Church she did so well preserve,

From popish errors, and from other crimes)

A lasting memory in all our times,

Should we that picture seeke for to deface,

We wrong our Church, likewise contemne his grace. . . .

Protestant: Me thinkes it is a comely desent thing,

To see our Saviours picture in the Church

And Saints in every light or window seene;

The more to adorne and beautifie this Church,

For in my minde, that place would best beseeme

A Saviours picture, then a pictured Queene,

Separatist: The Lord defend me, thou art one of hope,

And, an adopted son unto the Pope,

Thy faith is feeble, and thy state is weake,

Thou dost so fondly and prophanely speake,

Truly I feare the Lord hath thee forsaken,

Thou art so much with popish reliques taken³⁷

³⁷ *The Arraignement of Superstition or a Discourse between a Protestant, a Glasier, and a Separtist* (London: 1641), A3^v – A4^r.

Separatist appears to be haughty and arrogant in the conversation. By indiscriminately condemning “all’s popish that’s not like to you [Separatist]” (A4^f), he fails to win the mind of Protestant and to explain why “a pictured Queen” instead of “A Saviours picture” is more agreeable to the church. Protestant’s willingness to consider others’ view points and to judge them on the basis of common sense is effectively contrasted with the dogmatism of Separatist and the stubborn conservatism of Glasier, offering itself as a model for imitation to the target readers who were wavering like Protestant in the play on the issue of iconoclasm.

So far I have mainly discussed playlets as a hybrid literary form and how their writers incorporated dramatic elements into polemic writings for their political persuasion. The exciting development of theatricality during the time, however, does not stop at play pamphlets. Newsbooks, although appearing to have nothing to do with dramatic experience, had brought significant changes not only to our perception of the world but also to the operative mode of theatricality. Understanding the changes of theatricality in newsbooks also provides us a vantage point from which to observe the common characteristics of both newsbooks and pamphlet plays in terms that demonstrate the ways in which they pushed the established boundaries of theatricality for a new invention of dramatic experience. In the remaining section, I will explain the radical reconfiguration of theatrical mode by examining the ways in which newsbooks provided their readers with a dramatic experience of their own. I will also try to clarify by

examining John Crouch's pamphlet plays, the common ground which both newsbooks and pamphlet plays relied upon in the construction of theatricality.

The invention of newsbooks during the civil wars was an important step toward modern newspapers. Newsbooks, as Raymond argues, emerged and served as a new vehicle of popular communication over the course of war, enabling people in the remote country to stay connected to national politics and events (*The Invention of Newspaper* 15-16). Of course, there were comparable predecessors to newsbooks, which had been providing a similar news service before the civil war: newsletters and Corantos. But the Coranto was different from a newsbook because it was a serialized publication of foreign news (not domestic news) and, even though serialized, the publication was not regular. On the other hand, newsletters were on a subscription basis, and instead of selling them on the market to the unknown public, the news-providers were relying upon an already established business networks to offer their service to the specific buyers. If we consider that popularity and predictable periodicity are the defining features of today's newspaper, then, the newsbooks during the 1640s and 1650s for the first time in England met both criteria.

The first generation of newsbooks appeared in 1641-42 when the political tensions between the king and the parliament increased.³⁸ Initially supported or at least

³⁸ I follow Raymond's periodic distinction when I identified the newsbooks published during the years of 1641-42 as the first generation of the kind. First newsbooks (i.e. *Heads of Severall Proceedings*), according to Raymond, appeared in November 1641, "a few weeks after the reconvening of the Long Parliament after its autumn recess" (*The Invention of Newspaper* 20). Raymond considers the year 1643, in which the official royalist newsbook, *Mercurius Aulicus*, debuted, as the beginning of a second phase of newsbook history.

tolerated by MPs in the commons, the newsbooks reported on a weekly basis the subjects of debates in the house and the following motions and votes taken. The contemporary readers' appetite for news was so strong that the number of newsbooks on the market reached 320 between 1641 and 1645 (Sommerville 35). Many of these serials lasted less than one year but "33 of them went on for a year or more, showing a maturing of the industry" (Sommerville 35). For a modern reader, who is living in a saturated mass-media culture, there seems to be nothing fundamentally new in the appearance of newsbooks in 1640s. Not much different from pamphlets in terms of style and target audience, newsbooks appear to be just another addition to cheap literature, which gained its momentum since the outbreak of civil war. But from the viewpoints of the contemporaries, who hitherto had to mostly feed their hunger for news with hearsays and guess-work, the steady flow of information that enabled them to follow the major political events was a great innovation that helped them see things as never before.

To put the significance of this change in a perspective, I'd like to introduce briefly John Sommerville's *The News Revolution in England*. Sommerville in this book argues that periodical news brought revolutionary changes to our perception of reality and time and how we organize our lived experience. Although the print revolution has received much attention and discussion from literary historians, he points out that the revolutionary nature of periodical news was remained unrecognized, largely because "periodical publications used the same letterpress technology and it did not strike scholars that they represented any great difference in their effects on consumers" (6).

According to him, the implementation of periodicity was not simply one of many innovations that newsbooks brought to print culture. It was the most important innovation in the sense that it ensured the readers would continue to come back again and again for the further development of the news contents (the stories, if you will) they had read earlier. The passage below gives the points of his argument in brief.

Making news periodical means pushing for change, to have more to report. It means creating excitement – agreeable or otherwise. This might take the form of flattery, shock, worry, horror, puzzlement, blame. It needn't be pleasant to do the trick. At the time in which daily news first developed, people were also discovering snuff, which crates a sensation that would be intolerable if prolonged, but is only meant to be momentary. . . . Another way of saying this is that daily news means treating each day as equal, by producing an issue every day, keeping issues of relatively equal length, and charging the same whether the world turned a corner or not. We may term this the principle of the Absolute Present, which is the secular rival of the Eternal in absorbing everything into itself.³⁹

What is particularly fascinating in Sommerville's account is to see periodical news as a seductive cultural product designed to arouse emotional responses from the readers,

³⁹ John Sommerville, *The News Revolution in England : Cultural Dynamics of Daily Information* (Oxford University Press, 1996), 8-9.

instead of looking at it as a conveyor of objective information or facts. In his view, “there is no such thing as unreported news, because news is not natural” (Sommerville 4). Although “events are natural,” periodical news, according to him, is “a manufactured product” (Sommerville 4). His view of periodical news can be illuminating for us because it gives us a theoretical perspective through which to understand how news-making involves the use of dramatic components to highlight, and if necessary, sensationalize the conflicts in the news, and how the dramatization of everyday events gradually erodes the epistemological distinction between the theatrical and the non-theatrical. With the increasing power of news-making, the world is transformed into a theatrical stage on which the diverse drama of everyday life marches together until the date of the next edition.

In order to appreciate the different dramatic experience enabled by newsbooks, we need to briefly compare it with the traditional social practices based on the notion of *theatrum mundi*. For my argumentative purpose, it is very important to distinguish drama of everyday life in newsbooks from social practices based upon *theatrum mundi*. Understanding the world as theater was a familiar notion in early modern times, and as social practice its presence was as strong in the civil wars as in previous times. The execution of King Charles exemplifies how this notion and practice of theatricality was still pervasive in English society. As critics point out, the raised platform⁴⁰ for the execution of King Charles at the White Hall curiously mirrored theatrical stage settings.

⁴⁰ As for the etymological connection of scaffold to theater, especially in the context of King Charles’ execution, see Nancy Maguire, “The Theatrical Mask/Masque of Politics,” *Journal of British Studies* 28.1 (1989): 7.

The execution took place outside the Banqueting House, where the royal masques were formerly performed, and the scaffold was hung with black, as the public theaters were in order to signify the performance of tragedy.⁴¹ “An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell’s Return from Ireland” by Andrew Marvell exploits the same metaphoric association of the world as stage on which to perform when it comes to the final moment of the tragic king.

That thence the royal actor born
 The tragic scaffold might adorn,
 While round the armèd bands
 Did clap their bloody hands.

He nothing common did, or mean,
 Upon that memorable scene;
 But with his keener Eye
 The axe’s edge did try.

Nor called the Gods with vulgar spight
 To vindicate his helpless right;
 But bowed his comely head,
 Down, as upon a bed. (53-64)

⁴¹ I am grateful to Dr Margaret Ezell for this valuable information.

King Charles faithfully performs his duties integral to kingship. The beauty of his last performance lies in his unwavering courage to seal his life with what he believed to be a martyr's death. Unlike the postmodern performance, which aims to reveal the fluidity of social roles (identities), his royal performance is devoted to defend the transcendental order he believed to be immune from worldly threats. Through the traditional *theatrum mundi* topos, the threats Charles is facing quickly turn into the spiritual trials for him to prove his true character. By performing his royal duties, even at the risk of death, Charles shows that he is destined to be a (tragic) king.

In one sense, by delivering the news, such as accounts of Charles' execution, to those who could not personally witness the event, newsbooks appeared to complement rather than destroy social practices rooted in *theatrum mundi*. But this way of understanding is short sighted because it fails to see on a deeper level the ways in which newsbooks constituted a different kind of dramatic experience, which was made possible through the manipulation of perception by print and its resources. The following passage from *Perfect Diurnall* (1642) illustrates one example in which newsbooks create a dramatic experience through the manipulation of visual display.

This day, the Earl of *HOLLOND* brought a
 Message from His Majesty, in Answer to the late Peti-
 tion of both Houses; consisting of fower points, Viz.

I.

That the Towne Hull should be surrendred un-to Him.

II.

*That the sole claime and interest in the Militia, by
the Parliament; should be utterly disclaimed.*

III.

*That all the Shipps now at Sea, should be Deli-
vered up, Into His Majesties Hands.*

IIII.

*That the Parliament should be adjourned to
some other place, where His Majesty should thinke fit.*

And after mature deliberation hereof, both Houses
Voted.

I.

That it was not for the Kingdomes safety, to
Deliver up the Towne of *Hull*, until such time as his
Majesties Forces were disbanded.

II.

That for the Militia, they held it most fitting (according to his
Majesties former desires) to settle it by Bill.

III.

For the Shipping, they thought it could not be put

Into more surer hands then now it is both for the defence of his Majesty and Kingdome.

III.

Fourthly that the Parliament was in the most Eminent Place of the Kingdome, and where his Maiestie might abide in most peace and safetie, and there upon both Houses ordered that the Earle of Essex should forth with raise forces for the defence of his Majestie and Kingdome.⁴²

The head-to-head clashes between two political powers are conveniently displayed for the readers through an ingenious use of typography. The dramatic suspense that the readers are experiencing in this story, however, is not the same as the one that the MPs in the story would have experienced. In the same way that a movie editor would do to enhance the dramatic quality of the film, the news editor, although invisible in the story, intervened to create dramatic tension. He eliminates unnecessarily details or digressions that could disrupt the storyline and abridges the temporal and spatial gap between when Charles wrote the letter and when the parliament responded to it. In this way, the report is able to create an illusion of conversation between King Charles and MPs, which never took place in a real life.

⁴² *Perfect Diurnall*, 18 July 1642, 7-8, 517.2/E202(24).

Aside from the use of typography, newsbooks of this period were using diverse tactics to enhance the dramatic experience for their readers. Drawing upon the popular stereotypes (e.g. Roundheands and Cavaliers) and creating the caricatures of leading political figures (e.g. Oliver Cromwell's red nose; John Sedewick's missing thumb; King Charles's habit of stuttering) were easily recognizable examples of such tactics. The dramatic experience that the readers would have in the reading of the following passage from *Mercurius Britanicus*, which humorously remarks on the shabby printing of his rival newsbook (*Aulicus*), is more complicated than these tactics, and worthy of being explained in detail for it reveals the radical difference between theatricality of newsbooks and traditional theatricality.

Aulicus is now, as I prophesied long agoe, decayed into the sad singularity of one sheete, into the poverty of foure leane pages, you may see what time of yeare it is with his Invention, and how the world goes with him when his leafes fall off; and you may calculate their successe, and take measure of their condition at Oxford by him, as well as if you were in the Dutchesse of Buckingham's Closet. There is a report, I know not how true it is, that divers Counties about them have petitioned against *Aulicus*, against the plurality of two sheets, for they say he cost the good subjects as much as an ordinary sessement, and they were bound

to buy them, for it seems that should have one Article in the next
visitation of Hophney Dupper [Honey Dipper?].⁴³

Ridiculing a common enemy is one way to strengthen a bond of communal identity. Certainly, the editor (Marchamant Nedham) is very successful in making a laughing stock out of *Aulus* and using it/him as an opportunity for the communal experience. But what is new with this old trick is the fact that the communal identity was built upon periodic readerly experience. The phrase, “as I prophesied long agoe,” illustrates the steady relationship the editor presupposes in a conversation with his readers. In a similar manner, the speaker assumes that his readers should know who *Aulus* is and that they would feel the same way about the pitiful condition of *Aulus*. In one aspect, the comic relief both the editor and his faithful readers would experience appears to be very similar to the one that the dramatic audiences are likely to experience in comedies. In order to experience a comic relief, the newsbook readers should spend a good deal of time and efforts to know about the story in question and its main characters in a similar way the dramatic audience should do. But at the same time the way in which readers spend time on the story printed in the periodicals is very different from the experience of a dramatic audience. Reading in piecemeal at a time and over the long period, the periodic readers will dispense their time sometimes even without knowing that they are investing time and emotion for the readerly, communal experience.

⁴³ *Mercurius Britanicus*, 21, 29 January 29 1644/45, 162, 6/E 31(14).

The peculiarity of newsbooks' presentation of everyday life and its events does not simply lie in the mixing of different social groups and locations on the same page. More important is the fact that the resolution of each story in the news is never complete because the dramatic force of newsbooks hinges upon everyday revelations from the future, not upon prescribed norms and ideals sanctioned by traditions of the past as in the hermeneutics of *theatrum mundi*. I do not mean that early modern drama acted always as a vehicle of conservative ideology. The subversive voices and thrusts of early modern drama against political authority and the traditions are already well-known. My point here is not about the political nature of the contents but about the change in the dynamic between the ideal and the real, which took place inevitably when newsbooks started to segment and transform everyday life into serialized dramas to be read on a regular basis. As exemplified in Hamlet's famous speech on drama, the purpose of drama was "to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure" (3.2.21-24). Rather than be engrossed in specific details and contingent happenings, drama was expected to maintain the fidelity to ideal visions and values against the mirror of which human follies are anatomized. Accordingly, the conclusion of drama, which seals itself up from the form and pressure of time, tends to be prescriptive rather than descriptive, and its mode of presentation is idealistic instead of being realistic. A reference to a person or an event outside the work is usually minimal and conjectural at best not only because it is politically risky to straightforwardly speak of them but also because it can jeopardize the

transcendental illusion which is made possible through a removal from daily life. By breaking the mirror of the ideal and by reducing the gap between everyday life and dramatic world, newsbooks showed a possibility of a different kind of theatricality, which was rooted in print technologies and a rapidly increasing reading public.

Before closing this chapter, I'd like to introduce another pamphlet play, *Craftie Cromwell*, published under the author name of *Mercurius Melancholicus* in 1648. It is relatively well known that the Royalist pamphleteer John Crouch wrote this pamphlet play, but what is less known (or paid attention to) is that *Craftie Cromwell* was one of many pamphlet plays he wrote and published for a Royalist cause under the pseudonym *Mercurius Melancholicus*.⁴⁴ Around the time when Charles was in the custody of parliamentary leaders and rumored to be executed, Crouch published these pamphlet plays (perhaps periodically) and circulated them as if they were penned by *Mercurius Melancholicus* – a name made famous as the title of John Hackluyt's Royalist newsbook⁴⁵. The pamphlet plays Crouch wrote during this time (e.g. *The Cuckoo's Nest*, *Mistris Parliament*, *The Parliament Arraigned and Convicted*, etc) are loosely connected by a theme of pro-royalism and anti-Cromwellianism.⁴⁶ From a modern

⁴⁴ *Craftie Cromwell* was sometimes attributed to the water poet John Taylor. Recent studies, however, suggest that John Crouch wrote the pamphlet. See Nigel Smith, *Literature & Revolution, 1640-1660* (Yale University Press, 1994), 77; Lois Potter, *Secret Rites and Secret Writing*, 92.

⁴⁵ Lois Potter states “*Mercurius Melancholicus* was started in August 1647 by a Presbyterian minister [John Hackluyt], but soon taken over by a team of former balladwriters – Martin Parker, John Taylor and John Crouch” (“The Play and the Playwrights” 284).

⁴⁶ The second part of *Craftie Cromwell* is usually attributed to Marchamont Nedham. One of the clues that affirm his authorship is the title page of the second part, in which *Mercurius Pragmaticus* appears as its author name. Nedham during this time turned his coat and started to

editorial standard, it might be stretching it to say that his pamphlet plays could be considered as a serialized drama or fiction.⁴⁷ But, nonetheless, his writing practices with these pamphlet plays were quite experimental, positioned itself somewhere between traditional drama, newspaper, and propaganda. Especially, as *Crafty Cromwell* shows in the following passage, his pamphlet plays contain several propagandistic speeches, directly urging his audience to act for their King who is now in danger.

Chorus: Shall we never finde our error,

but still stumble, till we fall

Into the Pit of endless Terror,

for our Crime so capitall?

Shall we still behold our God

Despis'd, his Priests without abode,

Our King for ever under-trod?

...

England, will thy eyes never bee

With thy wrongs illuminated?

London, wilt thou never see,

But for ever be amazed?

serve for King Charles as an editor of *Mercurius Pragmaticus*.

⁴⁷ John Crouch began his new newsbook, *Man in the Moon*, in April 1649, three months after the execution of King Charles. Although published periodically, this newsbook is distinguished from others for its pornographic contents and folk humor of the chapbook tradition. For more details, see Joad Raymond, *The Invention of Newspaper*, 71-72; David Underdown, "The Man in the Moon: Loyalty and Libel in Popular Politics, 1640-1660." *A Freeborn People: Politics and the Nation in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press, 1996) 90-111.

Let England rowze, and London rise,
 Ere't be too late, if they be wise,
 T'regaine their pristine Dignities.⁴⁸

The play risks the illusion of its completeness as an artistic work by aggressively reminding his readers of the urgency of future action. The final words of the play spoken by Chorus are all the more specific in what he wants the reader to do in order to transform what might be a tragedy into a tragicomedy: the assassination of the Machiavellian Cromwell, who throughout the play is busy with making a plot that will make himself a king. Lamenting the current fallen state of England, Chorus ends the play by urging “some brave soule for vertue [to] stand/ And send his soule [Comwell] into Enio’s hand” (14). In this way, the sense of an ending is deliberately postponed until the readers take a final action.

Crouch’s *Craftie Cromwell* shows the complicated relationship between newsbook and pamphlet play as a literary form. Crouch strategically chooses to use the title of the Royalist newsbook (*Mercurius Melancholicus*) as the author of the pamphlet since the name was much more famous and communicative with his readers than the individual Crouch, who was clandestinely working as a Royalist pamphleteer. His way of establishing his authorship reveals not only the powerful influence of newsbook but also the affinity of newsbook with dramatic imagination as a literary form. As we have already examined in the earlier example about *Mercurius Britanicus*, everyday textual

⁴⁸ John Crouch, *Craftie Cromwell or Oliver Ordering Our New State* (London, 1648), 12-13.

intercourse with newsbooks via the controlling voice of their editors made the readers feel that newsbooks were more than lifeless objects, and their names were as powerful and real as those of men in flesh and blood. In this cultural climate, the readers no longer felt the epistemological trick of personification when someone like Crouch displaced the authorship of his work with the social (or collective?) authorship that a newsbook embodies. As a quasi-object reduced neither to an object nor to a subject, newsbooks earned the status of semi-human, commenting on and making fun of social events, and conversing with their readers and enemies. Thus, transforming a newsbook into a dramatic character becomes almost effortless because a newsbook from the outset has such a potential.

The ending of *Craftie Cromwell* also clarifies one of the important changes brought by newsbooks into the dramatic imagination. We've already examined the major difference in the dramatic experience that newsbooks offered as compared to those by traditional early modern drama. Newsbook provides a drama whose final resolution is perpetually postponed into an uncertain future. *Craftie Cromwell* mimics the ending of newsbooks by putting the final resolution in the hands of its readers. The indeterminacy and uncertainty of the ending as exemplified in *Craftie Cromwell* is not an isolated cultural phenomena. Ranters' writings and Milton's epics, which we will examine in more detail in later chapters, also concludes their dramatic performances with an open-ending, allowing more dynamic interactions with their readers and their participation in the story-making. The cause[s] of these significant changes in dramatic

forms, of course, could not be solely attributed to the invention of newsbooks. But, nonetheless, the change brought by newsbooks in the perception of worldly events was certainly one of the important contributions to the emergence of new dramatic forms.

C. Conclusion

So far I have shown how the burgeoning popular literature during the civil wars appropriated theatrical energy and dramatic components in order to attract a wider audience. Though appearing simple at first glance, the pamphlet plays used dramatic forms and components in diverse ways to get across their messages and to move the readers' hearts. The examples of pamphlet plays show how fluid the boundaries of news, drama, and propaganda were during the English Civil War. And this same fluidity is also found in the newsbooks. Despite the growing interests in the newsbooks during this period, the dramatic quality of newsbooks has not been fully addressed. In an attempt to show how newsbooks created a new type of theatricality, this chapter draws upon the theatrical insights from John Sommerville, and analyzes the ways in which newsbooks offered to the readers the drama(s) of everyday life whose unfolding events were no longer subordinated to the praise of ideal values and transcendental vision.

The revolutionary changes in the dynamic of print, reading public, and literary imagination during the civil wars surely invite us to reconsider the Habermasian public sphere. In his groundbreaking but now contested work, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas argued that at the turn of the eighteenth century England, significant and exciting changes in the way of communication and exchange of ideas

took place. In a time when the influence of the court as the center of the public sphere dwindled, a wide variety of social groups from nobility and bourgeois to the middle class started to meet and exchange their ideas and thoughts in new social venues such as coffee houses and meeting halls (Habermas 30-36). In Habermas' view, the new "social intercourse" emerging from the coffee house or salon was historically significant because "the nobility and the grande bourgeoisie of finance and administration . . . met with the intellectuals on an equal footing" without respect to social status and power (33). Under these new social settings, according to Habermas, people were encouraged to exercise their own reason, based upon the information daily available through news and popular journals, instead of following passively the doctrines of church and state (36-37). The key components or characteristics of public sphere (i.e. the independence of the press from state and church; the active participation of different classes in political matters; the invention of news and periodicals) that Habermas says flourished during the eighteenth century, interestingly, are also found in the civil war years. Calling attention to the unprecedented development of print culture fuelled by pamphlets and newsbook products, Raymond thus argues that "1695 was not a watershed in the emergence of a public sphere of popular political opinion; it was the 1640s that saw the most rapid development of informed popular debate, building on an expansion of political communication dating from the early 1620s" (*News, Newspapers, and Society*, 128).

The public sphere of the English civil wars, however, does not simply change the date of origin. It also demands radical revision of the notion of the public sphere. First, it

questions the underestimated role of women in general and men from laboring classes in the making of the history of the modern public sphere. The active voices of Levellers and Diggers, as briefly explained earlier, testify that the public sphere during the civil war period was not exclusively for educated, property-owning males. Second, it challenges or at least complicates Habermas' implied assumption that the modern public sphere resulted from the introduction of a rational distance separating individual from religious fervors and emotional excessiveness. As the peculiar usage of the word 'conscience' exemplifies,⁴⁹ the pamphleteers during the time appealed not only to the understanding and reasoning of each individual but also to his or her religious position and commitment. Religious issues and moral principles still remained key matters of concern, and readers and writers alike found it difficult to maintain aesthetic distance from the events in the telling. The typical middle class attitude toward political and cultural events (e.g. being disinterested and objective) that Habermas characterized as essential to the public sphere had not yet evolved to the point of becoming a dominant feature.

More importantly, however, the public sphere during the English civil wars makes us reconsider the rupture model that the Habermasian public sphere theoretically relies upon. Recent studies that emphasize the continuity rather than the break between the civil war and the Restoration period show that a collective insistence on sustaining

⁴⁹ In early modern times, the word conscience was not simply referring to "consciousness of right and wrong; moral sense." It could also mean "reasonableness, understanding, 'sense'"(OED). The usage of the word, in other words, indicates the absence of sharp distinction between morality and knowledge.

peace and stability during the Restoration was spurred on by the fear and memory of the Civil War experience.⁵⁰ Despite the royal imperative in the name of oblivion to "depart from al particular Animosities and Revenge, or memory of past Provocations" (*His Majesties Gracious Speech* 5), the involuntary remembrance of past experiences was sure to surface when Restoration contemporaries saw a possibility, whether immediate or remote, of political disorder. When the Popish Plot and the following succession crisis erupted in the years 1678-81, for example, people feared another civil war might be near (Knight 4-5). Even before then, when the second Dutch war (1665-67) ended with the humiliating defeat of English navy, the contemporary English people compared it, whether voluntarily or not, to the triumphant victory of Cromwell over the same enemy when he was in charge of the military. The Restoration society had fought hard to overcome the ghosts of the English civil wars and had to find a way to reconcile conflicting interests, whether of class, religion, or other social factors, in a non-violent way.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Jonathan Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis, 1677-1683*, 46-9; Tim Harris, "Understanding Popular Politics in Restoration Britain," *A Nation Transformed*, Eds. Alan Craig Houston and Steven C. A. Pincus (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 129-153; Mark Knights, *Politics and Opinion in Crisis, 1678-81*, (Cambridge University Press, 1994), 193-22.

⁵¹ While important changes (e.g. the increased presence of coffee houses, the creation of the Royal Society) emerged during the Restoration that gradually transformed the character of the public sphere, we should guard ourselves against exaggerating the differences of the public sphere after the civil war from that of the civil war. As my last chapter on Milton will show more in detail, religious and political conflicts that had dominated the interests of the reading public during the war did not vanish right away simply because the Stuart monarchy was restored. During the Restoration, the use of coercion and violent means were still coexisting with discursive exchange of political ideas. The transition from the religious to the secular and from the violent to the peaceful was slow and gradual, often disrupted by political crises and rebellions such as the Popish Plot and Monmouth's Rebellion.

Considering the evolutionary development of the public sphere as roughly sketched above, it is very tempting to argue that the new type of theatricality in the newsbooks contributed to the later birth of novels. But more extensive research work is needed to affirm this hypothesis, which is far beyond the scope of this chapter. To remind us of the danger of the linear cause-effect assumption, I want to add that the reading experience of newsbooks during that time might have been quite different from that in today's world. At least radical utopian social groups and millenarian sects believed that they were living in a revolutionary times, in which God's final will and his true intents would be revealed soon through surprising events and new prophecies. As for them, the news or information conveyed through newsbooks might have been read as allegorical signs from the God that the believers were expected to stay focus on to discern and follow God's will. In other words, instead of perceiving the events in the news as having nothing in common between them except that they happened to take place the same week, these groups might have felt them as closely tied and marched together to be eventually part of the cosmic drama orchestrated by God.

Of course, the possible existence of different reading practices among certain radical sects during this time remains speculative until more details and evidence are introduced and known. My point here is rather to suggest that a new theatricality (or realistic reading of the world) developed through pamphlet and newsbooks did not exclude other models of theatricality (e.g. allegorical reading of the world). As the manuscript culture and its writing practices did not disappear right away after the

introduction of print technologies, the old types of theatricality or theatrical practices were very likely to survive for a fairly long time to compete with and complement a new emerging theatricality.

CHAPTER III

ICONOCLASM AND POST-REFORMATION DRAMA

A. Iconoclasm and Theatricality

Antitheatrical Writings

In early modern historiography, puritan iconoclasm has often been cited to prove the negative attitude of puritans toward theatrical acts. Michael O’Connell’s *The Idolatrous Eye: Iconoclasm and Theater in Early-Modern England* (2000) is one such example, although it has its own special flavor of theory and approaches to drama. O’Connell argues that the ascending power of puritans produced a fundamental change not only in the ways of worship but also of “epistemology and aesthetic values” (17). Although initially expressed through the doctrinal and liturgical attacks against Catholic religious practices and masses that heavily used visual images and dramatic effects, the “iconoclastic impulse” (38) among puritan groups, O’Connell maintains, moved beyond the walls of the Church to emphasize the danger of image and its seductive power in secular settings as well. While identifying the increasing dominance of Calvinism as responsible for England’s departure from visual culture (61), O’Connell also acknowledges the role of print culture whose steady growth due to the support from puritans and humanists alike gradually resulted in the replacement of visual-based, with word-based worship: “For Erasmus – and humanism more generally – ‘Christ as text’ replaces the painted, sculpted Christ. For succeeding reformers Christ’s real presence as text would also eclipse his real presence in the visible, tactile Eucharist” (37).

Perhaps the most thought-provoking moment in this book, however, comes when he diagnoses the cultural movement of idolatry as the main cause for the disappearance of medieval plays –especially Corpus Christi plays- which had taken place on a regular basis in the regional centers such as York and Coventry. Corpus Christi plays, he points out, became the target of criticism by reformers who saw in the plays the (misplaced) veneration of the body of Christ and fleshly images. In the eyes of reformers, the religious plays were symptomatic of “the incarnational structure of late-medieval religion,” which had sustained itself through the use of “images, relics, the cult of the saints, liturgical ceremony, sacraments” and others of similar kind (50). O’Connell continues to argue that “the antitheatricalism” from the Elizabethan to the Caroline period is the later development of iconoclasm that had shattered the traditions of medieval drama, and it was this hatred and fear of image that finally led to “the closing of the public theaters in 1642.”

I want to insist that the antitheatricalism of the period is a subset of the iconoclasm that begins about a half century before and continues unabated along with it. The suppression of the medieval drama should be understood as an iconoclast victory just as much as the destruction of rood screens, painting, and sculpture. An analogous, though temporary, victory would be the closing of the public theaters in 1642.¹

¹ Michael O’Connell, *The Idolatrous Eye :Iconoclasm and Theater in Early-Modern England*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 17.

We've already discussed a different – hopefully more integrated- way of looking at the 1642 parliament act of closing the public theaters. In the pages that follow, I want to focus on the issue of puritan iconoclasm, which O'Connell and others identify as detrimental to the development of early modern drama and theatricality. Although I do not share O'Connell's view of iconoclasm, *The Idolatrous Eye* is an excellent book in the sense that it superbly illustrates how what appeared to be a purely religious matter of iconoclasm served to make the dynamics of image and word radically different from those in the medieval times. O'Connell is quite right when he argues for the necessity of exploring the impacts of iconoclasm on the cultural areas rather than replicating the discussions in the same religious terms as used by Englishmen in the sixteenth century and “focusing narrowly on the question of idolatry” (58). But to attain more sophisticated understanding of the impacts of iconoclasm on cultural phenomena, we must broaden our base of evidence and testimony beyond a few who cried out against the bad influence of the public theaters in London.

My point is not simply that there were equally impressive numbers of Puritans in early modern England who endorsed theater as a tool of education and social reformation. John Bale's experimental biblical plays during the reign of Henry VIII, Philip Sidney's passionate defense of arts and drama in *Defense of Poetry*, John Fox's action- packed narrative and his ingenious use of wood-cuts for dramatic effects in *Acts and Monuments*, the well-known sympathies of Thomas Middleton, Thomas Dekker and Richard Broome to militant Protestantism and religious reforms as expressed through

their dramatic works, and John Milton's ingenious attempt to rewrite the court masque genre in *Comus* are only a few such examples.² More important to consider, however, is the implied assumption in his book that the intention of one social group is powerful enough to determine the shift of ideological and aesthetic values in a certain historical time. This view is problematical because social practices, instead of being dictated by one powerful group, are always in the process of negotiation and struggle between various social groups. Historical documents clearly show that the reformists since Henry VIII, when they held hegemony, used their political power to correct what they considered wrongful worship of God by removing ornamental objects from the church.³ But it is not always clear whether the removal of idolatrous images from Church and religious communities also guaranteed the suppression of the same kind in other cultural areas.

Tessa Watt's nuanced studies of early modern ephemeral print culture in *Cheap Print and Popular Piety* (1991) give us a different picture of the cultural change in early modern times, which complicates the theory of the decreased vitality of the visual

² See, for example, Margot Heinemann's extensive discussion on the Puritanism of Middleton's city comedies in *Puritanism and Theatre*; Susan Krantz's article, "Thomas Dekker's Political Commentary in *The Whore of Babylon*," *SEL* 35.2: 271-91; Julia Briggs's comments on the notion of puritans as theater haters, *This Stage-Play World* (Oxford University Press, 1983), 168-70; David Norbrook's studies on the reforming of the courtly entertainments in the Jacobean and Caroline period, "The Reformation of the Masque," *The Court Masque*, ed. David Lindley (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1984), 94-110; a group of articles written about Milton's *Comus* as a reformed masque, such as John Creaser, "The Present Aid of this Occasion: the Setting of *Comus*," *The Court Masque*, 111-34; Leah Marcus, "John Milton's *Comus* " *A Companion to Milton*, ed. Thomas N. Corns (Oxford: Blackwell, 200), 232-45.

³ See Ronald Hutton, "The Local Impact of the Tudor Reformations," *The Impact of the English Reformation, 1500-1640*, ed. Marshall Peter (London; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 142-66.

culture after the Reformation. While admitting that “much of the statuary and wall painting” in the church “had been removed or covered” by the order of religious and political authorities, she finds continued and increased use of illustrations in cheap print materials such as ballads and pamphlets. Illustrations on the pages were usually treated differently from the paintings on the wall, because their relatively small size and their subordination to narrative functions made it difficult to consider “meditational objects in themselves”(167). The use of images for the purpose of education and propaganda was tolerated and to some degree encouraged. With detailed examples, Watt points out that “satirical pictures of the pope” and the grotesque images of Catholic church were popular “as late as the 1640s” (158). Watt also points out that because of the improved technologies of woodcuts over the century that more woodcut images were able to be reproduced at cheaper price and this technological development enabled the increased consumption of images even to the level of less educated groups (148-50). One of the ramifications of her findings with cheap print culture was that visual culture, although losing vitality in one social space, managed to stay alive in another by adapting skillfully to the changed circumstances. The demand for the visual was huge especially among the illiterate and semi-illiterate -- and whether the radical reformers liked the idea of using visuals or not -- it was (and would have been) extremely difficult for one political or religious group to stop the traffic of image across every level of social interaction. In the previous chapter, we’ve seen how the theatrical energy was displaced onto the new medium of pamphlets and newsletters after the closing of public theaters in 1642. In

some sense, Watt shows us in her work is the parallel process of the displacement of images from one area to another and how this process produced a different dialectic between image and word. When displaced from their base, visual images often did not retain the old function and form. John Fox's *Acts and Monuments* can be a good example that allows us to learn how a change of media involved more than superficial relocation of the images from one place to another.

Described by Watt as having "achieved a status close to that of a second Bible," John Fox's *Act and Monuments* is one of the most important and influential books in the book history of England (Watt 90). "Nearly four times the length of the Bible," John King explains, "the monumental fourth edition is the most physically imposing, complicated, and technically demanding English book of its era" (1). Especially "the complexity of paratext and spectacular woodcut illustration" made the book "the best-illustrated English book of its time" (King 1). The illustrations in *Acts and Monuments* would certainly have helped the book to gain its popularity even among the illiterate and the semiliterate. Citing the historian J. H. Plumb, Richard Helgerson observed in *Forms of Nationhood*: "the Bible, *Acts and Monuments*, and *The Pilgrim's Progress*, '[are] often the only books which the illiterate, the semiliterate, and the literate poor even knew in any detail'" (287).

The illustrations in *Acts and Monuments* are impressive not simply because of the number of appearances but also because of their stark difference in style and form from traditional iconography of saints. As John King shrewdly comments, "unlike

traditional saints, Foxean martyrs” in the illustrations “are recognizable people from all walks of life who are invested with neither supernatural powers nor the power of intercession between the human and divine. They range from lowly peasants to learned bishops. Exemplifying the Protestant conviction that divinely imputed faith informs ordinary individuals with a capacity to testify to their beliefs despite pain, suffering, and death, these woodcut portrayals provide visual models worthy of emulation by other believers” (9). The departure of Fox’s book from traditional iconography is more apparent when we notice that Fox’s woodcuts are much more realistic and mundane in the portrayal of the saints and religious events. Many woodcuts in *Acts and Monuments* contain execution scenes of the early protestant martyrs in the sixteenth century such as John Frith, Hugh Latimer, and William Tyndale. In the scenes, the martyrs are usually surrounded by crowds, soldiers and their persecuting Catholic clergy (figure 1 and figure 2). By capturing the dramatic moment of execution that signifies the spiritual battle between Christian belief and anti-Christian power, the woodcuts exhort the readers to remember the martyrs’ heroic deeds and their invincible faith rather than seek fruitlessly in their physicality the external signs of majesty and power that had been confirmed over and over in the traditional iconography of the saints.

K. Henry 8.

The description of the persecution, and death of Tho. Benet Martyr.
The burning of Iohn Frith, and Andrewe Hewet.

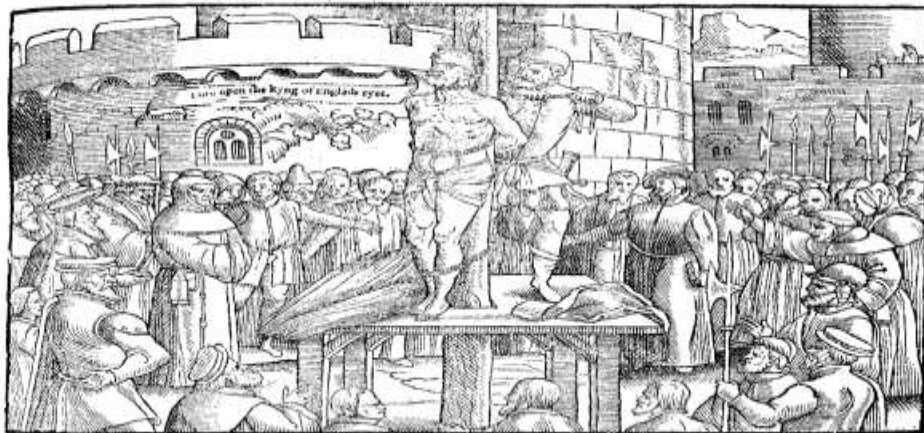


finding desired the Lord to forgive him. These his words
 did not a little move the people unto anger, and not with-

out good cause. Thus these two blessed Martyrs committ-
 ed their souls into the hands of God.

< Figure 1: *Book of Martyrs*, Vol. 2 (1583), 1037>

¶ **The Martyrdome and burning of mayster William Tyndall,**
 in Flaunders, by Filford Castle.



<Figure 2: *Book of Martyrs*, Vol. 2 (1583), 1079>

The focus on heroic acts in a dramatic setting is continued in the depiction of St. Peter. St. Peter in the three-fold illustration of “A Table of the X. first Persecutions of the Primitive Church” (figure 3) did not receive a special iconic treatment when he appeared with dozens of Christians, who fell victim to extreme tortures and gruesome executions during the reign of “Tiberius, unto Constantius Emperours of Rome.”



<Figure 3: *Book of Martyrs*, Vol. 1 (1583), 795>

Depicting luridly the physical violence and torture inflicted upon the Christians, the woodcut emphasizes the brutality that Christians as a group had to endure over centuries for the sake of their faiths. The individuality of each believer is submerged to emphasize the collective battle between Christians and their enemies, which leads St. Peter to be recognized simply as one of them instead of an extra-ordinary individual. John King convincingly explains the Reformation aspect of the woodcut in the following way:

Amidst an array of anonymous figures, only three portrayals of traditional saints [Laurence, Ignatius, Cassianus] join St. Peter in the 'Table of the X. first Persecutions.' Because these figures depart from late medieval conventions, in certain respects, they call into question that the Foxe-Day program of illustration is 'iconic' rather than iconoclastic. Wholly absent are the iconic emblems that identify stylized representations of saints in pre-Reformation and Counter-Reformation stained glass windows, religious images, and book illustrations. [. . .] Inviting the pious gaze of devotees who look on them as intercessors between human and divine, the static iconicity of hieratic images of saints who appear immune to pain and suffering is very different from the physical contortion, dynamic emotionality, and realism of Foxean woodcuts.⁴

Seen in this way, Fox's woodcuts show a different use of images, which sharply contrasts to traditional iconography sanctioned by Catholic traditions. Of course, I do

⁴ John King, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs' and Early Modern Print Culture*, (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 211-12.

not argue here that Fox's illustrations are the only model available for the printers and authors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is certainly plausible to imagine that Catholics, as a reaction to the removal of images from Church by the Reformers, took advantage of printed illustrations to extend rather than subvert their iconographic tradition. Nonetheless, the examples of the woodcuts by Fox and his publisher John Day remind us that the changed dynamic between image and word in the post-Reformation England was not as simple as it might have appeared. As Tessa Watt and John King suggests, the overall number of images after the Reformation increased rather than decreased, though in a certain cultural and social venue the strict prohibition of the use of image was imposed.

When literary historians highlight the repressive measures by puritans with the evidence of broken stained glass and deformed statues in the church, they cause us to overlook equally important changes happening in other cultural areas. As Benjamin famously noted in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," what reformers brought the end of life to was not images themselves but the mystic aura that was attached to them. According to Benjamin, the statues and images in the shrine or holy places were traditionally considered to have an aura because of their imagined authenticity: A particular object with aura was usually kept hidden from the spectators: "Certain statutes of gods are accessible only to the priest in the cella; certain Madonnas remain covered nearly all year round; certain sculptures on medieval cathedrals are invisible to the spectator on ground level" (225). The exhibition of the images to the

public was strictly controlled for the sake of their “cult value.” Reformers were able to destroy this cult value not largely by further restricting the sacred images but by mass-producing and circulating them beyond church walls by means of print media.

In a similar way, puritans’ distaste against Catholic theatricality, which O’Connell marshals to confirm their negative role in early modern drama, needs to be re-contextualized in order to reflect more dynamic interactions between word and image. O’Connell’s analysis of how the first generation of Reformation suppressed the medieval biblical drama in the name of idolatry is well argued and supported strongly with historical documents. After all, history shows us the rapid disappearance of biblical drama in regional centers after the supervision of Reformed clergy sent from London. But it is questionable whether anti-theatrical tracts against public theaters in post-Reformation England can be discussed in the same heading of massive Reformation movement. To argue for the continuing negative role of protestants/puritans in the fields of visual arts and drama alike in the latter sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, O’Connell highlights the criticism of public theaters by religious writers such as John Northbrooke, Stephen Gosson, and William Prynne. By calling them “Puritan antitheatricalists” (13) and suggesting their harsh criticism of public theaters deriving from the concern of idolatry, O’Connell implicitly argues that each antitheatricalist shares the same political and religious ground which led them to oppose theatrical performances. But when we examine the antitheatricalists’ writings, we find that they do not oppose theatrical performance for the same reason or purpose.

First, Northbooke's criticism of plays in *A Treatise* (1577?) is mainly written for spiritual advice to Christian youths who might misspend their past-time unworthy of the deity they worship. Written in a dialogue between allegorical characters, Youth and Age, this tract details many evil past-time Christians should abstain from, and commercial plays are identified as one of many moral threats to avoid. Dancing, dicing, and plays are all evil inventions because they not only open the door to sinful desires but also deprive the opportunity of Christians to make the most of their leisure for godly purpose: "he [Christian] must needs much more be inforced of Christian Knowledge and Charitie, to imploy his labours in bestowing those gifts which God hath given him to the profit of others than those philosophers, which knew not god alright in his word, through Jesus Christ." The concern about idolatry, in my reading, is not a reason to oppose theatrical performances. And the following lines spoken through the mouth of Age indicates a much more flexible (and possibly complicated) attitude toward drama.

Age: I think it is lawfull for a Scholemaster to practise his schollers to play Comedies, observing these and the like cautions. First that those Comedies which they shall play, be not mixt with any ribaudrie And filthyie termes and words (which corrupt good manners.) Secondly, that it be for learning and utterance sake, in Latine, and very seldome in Englishe. Thirdly, that they use not to play commonly, and often, but verye rare and seldome. Forthlye, that they be not pranked and decked up in gorgeious and sumptuous

apparell in their play, fiftly, that it be not made a common exercise publikley for profit and gaine of money, but for learning and exercise sake. And lastly, that their Comedies bee not mixte with vaine and wanton toyes of love. These being observed, I judge it tollerbalbe for scholler.⁵

The passage quoted suggests that Northbooke approves the use of dramatic performances for educational purposes, even though reluctantly. “As farre as good excercises and honest pastimes & plays does benefit the health of manne, and recreate his wittes,” Age argues that he does not oppose them (23). What he argues against is the abuse and misuse of the recreations, and as for him the commercial plays was dangerous because they served as a seedbed for the growth of “thousande mischiefes and inconveniences” (57).

On the other hand, Stephen Gosson’s antitheatrical tracts, *The Schoole of Abuse* (1579) and *Playes Confuted in Five Actions* (1582), narrow their focus to target commercial theaters rapidly emerging in London during the time. Although both antitheatrical tracts are serious pleas for closing down theaters, the latter, written as a response to Thomas Lodge’s defense of theaters (i.e. *A Reply to Stephen Gosson's Schoole of Abuse*), is distinguished from the former by its more forceful attacks against theaters and its grounding of the accusations heavily on what he believes to be Christian principles and faith. Especially the accusation against theaters as the source of idolatry

⁵ John Northbrooke, *A Treatise Wherein Dicing, Dauncing, Vaine Plaies or Enterludes . . . are reprov'd* (London, 1577?), 76.

is explicit only in the latter, whereas in *The School of Abuse*, Gosson often justifies his criticism of theaters with the citation of heathen Humanists such as Plutarch, Maximus of Tyre, and Ovid.⁶

In *Playes Confuted in Five Actions*, Gosson throws every possible negative charge against the stage plays to convince the reader of his view that “Stage Playes are the doctrine and invention of the Devill”(sig. B4^r). He bemoans, for example, how everyday exposure to stage plays feminized the once great warriors of England, and also condemns the theaters for mixing men and women in the same place to the risk of sexual promiscuity. Unlike Northbook’s polemical writing, Gosson repeatedly evokes the danger of stage plays by associating them with “idolatry.” Stage plays are idolatrous because they originated from the worship of heathen gods: “whatever was consecrated to the honour of the Heathen Gods was consecrated to idolatrie” (sig. B4^v). The “glittering” pomp and the unbridled display of emotions on the stage also make the commercial plays guilty of the charge of idolatry. In Gosson’s eyes, the pleasing spectacles, the “wanton speech,” and the “pomp” of vainglory are idolatrous because they excite the gaze and admiration of the playgoers, eventually letting them forget their Christian faith and duty.

Shall wee that write of the law, of the Prophets, of the gospel, of
God himself, so looke, so gaze, so gape upon plaies, that as men
at the stare on the head of Medusa are turned to stones, wee

⁶ Heinemann notes the role of city fathers in Gosson’s first antitheatrical tract by arguing, Stephen Gosson was “almost certainly hired by the City fathers . . . to attack the stage in his *School of Abuse*” (29).

freeze unto ease in our owne follies? . . . let the
 commandements of our God which are autentike; let the care of
 our souls that shall be judged; let the threatening of him that
 detesteth hypocrisie, pompe, and vanitie, so strike our hearts,
 that we tremble & shiver at the remembrance of folly past,
 gather up our wittes onto amending.⁷

Behind Gosson's antitheatrical rhetoric lies the assumption that the pursuit of sensual pleasure and immediate gratification is the typical way in which heathen gods have been worshipped. Thus, the criticism Gosson levels against stage plays for the reason of their heathen origins is indiscriminately blended with the biting accusations against the seductive power the theater wields over the minds of its audience. This problematic reasoning goes further when Gosson refuses to distinguish the historical and institutional difference that set apart Elizabethan secular playhouses from the religious theaters in Ancient Greek and Roman times. If the history of ancient Greece and Rome confirmed that theaters in ancient times had been used to the honor of heathen gods such as Venus and Jupiter, Gosson reasons that those Elizabethan playgoers could not be different from the worshippers of heathen gods because they join the same heathen rituals commonly called 'theaters' to fulfill bodily pleasure and gratification. The commercial Elizabethan theaters thus in the view of Gosson becomes the place of worship of heathen gods.

⁷ Stephen Gosson, *Playes Confuted in Five Actions* (London, 1582), sig. E7v –E8r.

What is idolatry but to give that which is proper to God unto them that are no gods? What is so proper unto God as worship to his majesty; Trust, to his strength; Prayer, to his help; Thanks to his goodness? Setting out the Stages playes of the Gentiles, so we worship that we stoop to, the name of heathen idols; so we trust that we give ourselves to, the patronage of Mars, of Venus, of Jupiter, of Juno and such like; so we pray, that we call for their succour upon the stage; so we give thanks for the benefits we receive, that we make them the fountains of all our blessings, wherein, if we think as we speak, we commit idolatry, because we bestow that upon the idols and the heart, honouring the Gods of the heathens in lips and in gesture, not in thought, honouring the Gods of the heathens in lips and in gesture, not in thought, yet it is idolatry; because we do that which is quite contrary to the outward profession of our faith.⁸

Although Gosson used the word ‘idolatry’ as a shibboleth to reveal the satanic nature of commercial London theaters, his antitheatrical tracts do not clearly show what exactly his position is on the issue of the visual. Bodily sensations excited through the gaze on theatrical events were condemned by him as heathenish and idolatrous. But it is not entirely clear the reason that they are idolatrous because they were the ancient form of

⁸ Stephen Gosson, sigs. D7^v- D8^r.

ritual for heathen gods or because they were disturbingly visual and emotional.⁹ At least in the biographical context, Gosson showed that he had no qualms about allowing theatrical elements at Church service. Contrary to what we commonly believe, Gosson was not a puritan. As Arthur Kinney points out, when Gosson was appointed vicar of St Ablan's Church in 1586, he "was loyal to the Book of Common Prayer, wore a surplice, used the sign of the cross at baptism, and conducted the service at a proper font in the front of the church – easy assumptions that he was a puritan have no foundation in fact" (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*).¹⁰ In his 1598 sermon *The Trumpet of Warre*, according to Héloïse Sénéchal, Gosson went further and called puritans "vermin," distinguishing his humanistic education at the King's School in Canterbury and Corpus Christi College, Oxford from the "doctrinal tub-thumping" of puritans (Sénéchal 2). It should be also noted that Gosson tried his hand seriously at drama before publishing his antitheatrical tracts. Although these plays are no longer available, the plays appear to have enjoyed some commercial success in his time. Interestingly, Gosson did not suppress his misspent past in his antitheatrical writings. Instead, "To the Reader" both in *The Schoole of Abuse* and *Playes Confuted in Five Actions* explicitly represents it as folly of his life before the new birth by the grace of God. In this sense, Gosson's antitheatrical pamphlets "could be described in terms of an evangelical

⁹ Bryan Crockett disagrees with O'Connell's view that Gosson and antitheatrical writers exhibited intense anxiety about the visual. Instead, he argues that Gosson was more concerned with the acoustic impact of theater upon its audience. For more detail, see Bryan Crockett, *The Play of Paradox Stage and Sermon in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: New York: Univeristy of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 68.

¹⁰ For further detail about the misapplication of the term puritan to Gosson, see

conversion” (Lake & Questier 433), a form of writing that recants one’s past sinful deeds from the viewpoint of a Christian.

Gosson’s attempt to fashion himself as a champion of Christian morals appears to be not entirely spiritually motivated. He dedicated each of his pamphlets to powerful national leaders, respectively to Philip Sidney and Francis Walsingham, probably in the hope of gaining courtly patronage. It is not easy to determine how much his pamphlets helped him move up the social ladder but his allegiance to Francis Walsingham in his later years suggested a positive role of his pamphlets in the process of career-building. Regardless of the impact of his antitheatrical tracts upon his later life, it is noteworthy that they certainly generated a degree of public attention that Northbrook’s polemic failed to. As frequently cited by literary historians, *The School of Abuse* triggered a spate of pro- and anti- theatrical writings. Thomas Lodge, an Elizabethan dramatist and writer, shortly answered *The School of Abuse* with *Honest Excuses, A Defense of Poetry, Reply to Gosson*. The exchange of words between these two over the nature of theaters continued with the subsequent publication of *Playes Confuted in Five Actions* (1582) and *An Alarum Against Usurers* (1584). Not only these two writers but also others such as Antony Munday and Thomas Heywood joined the battle either to approve or disapprove the role of public theaters.

The years from 1579 to 1612, when these polemical writings dramatically increased, were also marked by the vibrant development of commercial theaters in the London. Starting with the year of 1576, when Burbage built the first permanent theater,

Theater, in Shoreditch, a northern suburb just outside London, a host of major commercial theaters such as the Swan (1595), the First Globe (1599), the Hope (1614), and the Second Globe (1614) began to emerge in a very short span of time. The rapid expansion of commercial/public theater in London was very likely to be alarming to some of the clergy, not simply because the plays on stage were immoral or un-Christian but also because commercial theaters took away their audience (i.e. laymen). In other words, although antitheatrical writers attacked public theaters on the grounds of moral or religious principles, the sudden rush of their writings at the time when the commercial theater increased their number suggests that their concerns were also professional and pragmatic. Especially the fact that playing was allowed on the Sabbath led the clergy to more strongly attack the commercial theaters. As Peter Lake points out, the contrast often drawn by antitheatrical writers “between full theatres and empty churches . . . suggests powerfully that what was at stake here was competition for an audience - if not for exactly the same audience, then certainly overlapping audiences” (429).

Contrary to the heated responses from the pulpits and the playwrights that followed after the publication of Gosson’s antitheatrical tracts, William Prynne’s antitheatrical writing did not generate a similar level of enthusiasm on either side. Critics have often ignored this lack of interest and instead used his antitheatrical writing as evidence of the continuing tension between church and theater, which eventually, they argued, culminated in the civil war crisis. But this linear reading of early modern dramatic history fails to consider the dialectic interactions between drama and religion

that had been developing over the two decades since the establishment of commercial theaters. Martin Butler, the rare exceptional voice against this oversimplified opposition between Puritanism and theater, points out the significant improvement in the condition of commercial theater during the reign of King James and Charles I, which served to weaken the base of “puritan militancy against the stage”:

The reasons for the decline of puritan militancy against the stage are not far to seek. Although buttressed by disapproval of the hypocrisy of acting and by reference to the biblical prohibition against men dressing as women, the principal grounds of hostility had always been the social dangers the theaters posed and the fact that they did not observe the Sabbath. By the 1630s, both these complaints had largely been answered. With the rise to importance of the ‘private’ playhouses, theater-going had become a much more respectable activity. Three ‘public’ stage still performed, but the theaters did not pose exactly the same social menace that they once had seemed to; Prynne was not attacking quite the same rowdy, volatile institution that Gosson and Stubbes had been. Secondly, when James had forbidden Sunday playing, and Charles confirmed his order, a fundamental point of friction was at once removed, and to this we should

probably ascribe much of the puritan acceptance of the theaters
as a permanent element in weekday life.¹¹

It is in this historical context that we need to distinguish the increasing attack against Royal masque and the court's Sunday performance by the pamphleteers during the 1630s and 40s from the criticism of emerging commercial theaters in the previous generation. As I have already shown in my analysis of the dramatic discourse in the first chapter, the puritan groups during the civil wars were more critical of the court culture and politics, which were getting alarmingly closer to Catholic ideals and practices, rather than theatricality per se.

Shakespeare, Jonson and Antitheatricalism

The relationship between theatricality and Protestant Christianity in post-Reformation England was much more complicated than we moderns would normally imagine. Bryan Crockett markedly points out in *The Play of Paradox* that the sermon in the seventeenth century was more theatrical than that of later centuries. Removed from the theatrical devices that had once supported church service, the Reformation sermon had to take on "some of the ritual force, some of theatricality that it was meant to replace" (Crockett 33). Preachers like Playfere, Andrews, and Donne tried out a variety of rhetorical and literary skills to exploit the potential of the spoken word (Crockett 63). By using the ingenious conceit and literary figures and by casting the cosmic struggle between the antichrist and the Christ in dramatic terms, the preachers endeavored to

¹¹ Martin Butler, *Theatre and Crisis, 1632-1642*, 97.

capture the wonder of the divine and to make the experience of God all the more fresh and transformative.

Crockett explains this dramatic experience both in the pulpit and the stage with the notion of “the cult of ear.”

If a driving force for a playwright like Jonson as well as for the Protestant reformers was a distrust of the Catholic cult of the eye, one recourse of both playwrights and preachers was what I have called the cult of the ear. Such a situation, in fact, helps to explain the explosive development of verbal art forms during the last quarter of the sixteenth century. The period is unquestionably informed by a pervasive desire to exploit the artistic potential of the spoken word.¹²

The “cult of ear” affirms and celebrates the presence of the Word, which the players and preachers have to bring to life by asking the audience to look inwardly for the spiritual origins of their utterances. To invent the cult of ear, Renaissance drama deployed different rhetorical tactics and theatrical effects. For example, using the bare stage with only a few key props simplified the play’s visual aspects, which helped the audience to be more focused on the verbal performance of the players. The audience’s ability to relish the rhetorical flourishes and to follow the imaginary journey conveyed through poetic language can be attested to by the strong presence of lengthy soliloquies, which

¹² Bryan Crockett, *The Play of Paradox* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 69.

makes Renaissance drama so unique from others. Furthermore, the Reformation imperative to adopt a suspicious stance toward the visual was exploited as often as ridiculed for dramatic effect in Renaissance drama. The famous speech of Hamlet below, which follows when Queen Gertrude chides his prolonged mourning the loss of his father, offers a relevant case in point.

Queen: Why seems it so particular with thee?

Hamlet: Seems, madam? nay, it is. I know not “seems.”

‘Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
 Nor customary suits of solemn black,
 Nor windy suspiration of forc’d breath,
 No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
 Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
 Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief
 That can denote me truly. These indeed seem,
 For they are actions that a man might play,
 But I have that within which passes show –
 These but the trappings and the suits of woe (1.2. 76-86).

Hamlet’s expression of his grief is exaggerated and dramatic. But the dramatic feeling of the passage is peculiar because it comes out of the recantation rather than the affirmation of ceremonial posture. As a reformed mourner, Hamlet positions himself as a person who scorns artificial and dramatic gestures – “I know not ‘seems’-- often

practiced in a traditional funeral. By redefining the traditional form of grief -- “inky cloak, “forc’d breath,” “dejected haviour” and so on -- as something pretentious and by portraying it as falling short of expressing his inner grief, Hamlet divorces his grief from external ceremonious practices and transforms it into the eternal loss beyond the reach of any external marks.¹³

Hamlet’s speech is a small example of how dramatic effect can be created without subscribing itself to the cult of visual culture. By simultaneously evoking the visual images and at the same time recanting them as something vain and ungodly, the Reformed writer can maintain dramatic effects. Milton’s ambivalent engagement with Satan and Eve as the seductive visual image in his epic, and George Herbert’s self-cancelling gesture in his verse by arguing for the supremacy of plain words over crafted language would be more of the same practice.¹⁴ More importantly, however, the resistance against the visual also serves as a driving force to move Renaissance drama forward. In other words, instead of functioning as an impediment to the development of Renaissance drama, the iconoclastic impulses helped drama improve itself and move onto another level. Ben Jonson, for example, in “The Epistle” of *Volpone* (1607), illustrates how his drama – now morally fortified- can be immune from the censure of

¹³ For the impact of the Reformation upon mourning practices and the expression of grief in early modern England, see Patricia Phillippy, “Map of Death,” *Women, Death, and Literature in Post-Reformation England* (New York & Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 15-48.

¹⁴ See, for example, Helen Wilcox, “George Herbert,” *The Cambridge Companion to English Poetry, Donne to Marvell*, ed. Thomas N. Corns (Cambridge University Press, 1993), 183-99; Christine Froula, “When Eve Reads Milton,” *Canons*, ed. Robert von Hallberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 149-75; Linda Gregerson, *The Reformation of the Subject* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 148-63 & 206.

antitheatricalists. In the epistle, Jonson made some concession to the antitheatricalists by admitting that in the “stage poetry” of these days “nothing but ribaldry, profanation, blasphemy, all license of offence to God and man is practised” (34-35). Mimicking the voice of antitheatricalists, Jonson continues to harp on the current corruption of dramatic works but insists that his dramatic work is a far cry from scurrilous writings now in fashion. He claims that he studiously “stand[s] off from” the follies of theaters of his age and tries to demonstrate in his “latest work” a reformed drama by bringing back “not only the ancient forms, but manners of the scene – the easiness, the propriety, the innocence and, last, the doctrine which is the principal end of poesie: to inform men in the best reason of living”(96-97, 100-102).

One may argue that Jonson’s reformed drama is not so much concerned with iconoclasm as with humanistic learning, especially when we consider that it was Ben Jonson who often ridiculed puritans’ excessive zeal against heresy or idolatry in his own plays such as *The Alchemist* and *Bartholomew Fair*. But we should not allow our perception of Ben Jonson as a Catholic who was an outspoken opponent of puritan reforms to distort our observation. The opening scene of *Volpone*, which lavishly depicts Volpone’s ceremonial worship of his gold, is written in explicitly religious terms (e.g. “Saint,” “dumb God,” “heaven,” “hell,” “relic of Sacred Treasure”) to reflect the issue of iconoclasm and to admonish the danger of visual pleasure. Jonson’s distrust of the visual is also found in another play, *The Staple of News* (1625), when he addresses the playgoers who busily run after gossips, fashion trends and cheap curiosities in the

satirical voice of Prologue. In a bid to correct the wrong expectation of the playgoers,

Prologue says:

For your own sakes, not his, he [the playwright] bade me say,
 Would you were come to hear, not see, a play.
 Though we his actors must provide for those
 Who are our guests here in the way of shows,
 The maker hath not so. He'd have you wise
 Much rather by your ears than by your eyes, ("The Prologue for the
 Stage," 1-6)

In defending his authorship as playwright, it was crucial for Jonson to downplay the role of the visual in drama. When speaking about royal masque whose popularity heavily hinges on the opulent display of rich costume, elaborate scenery and scenic effects, Jonson insists in *Hymenaei* (1606) that the poet is superior to the painter by arguing that "the outward celebration or show" is "but momentary and merely taking," whereas "the inward parts, and those grounded upon antiquity and solid learning" are "impressing and lasting."¹⁵ By presenting his work as something more than the collection of visual images, Jonson tries to distinguish his authorship from other competitors, including Inigo Jones.¹⁶

¹⁵ Stephen Orgel, *Inigo Jones: The Theatre of the Stuart Court*. Vol. 1. (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1973), 106

¹⁶ It is well known among literary historians that Ben Jonson as a court poet had collaborated with Inigo Jones to produce many of the court masques in the reign of King James and Charles. Nonetheless, their partnership was often fraught with conflict over whose role (i.e. the poet versus the painter/architect) was more important in the producing of court masques. For the

Although less explicit in the case of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* (1600), Shakespeare promotes a similar argument about aesthetics by encouraging the audience to compare his own play to the play within a play by "rude mechanicals." The play within a play staged by Bottom and his fellows on the nuptial night of Theseus and Hippolyta resembles in many different ways a medieval drama tradition. The play is performed not only by non-professional actors but also against the festive backdrop of May Day and midsummer (Williams 58). The love story of Pyramus and Thisbe is certainly not a typical subject commonly found in a mystery cycle, but the story represents a folktale told from one generation to another, perhaps one of the familiar romances that Shakespeare and his audience were likely to have known in their childhood. By having the rustics perform the love story everyone easily connects to, Shakespeare is able to bolster the semblance of community encompassing age and social class.¹⁷

It is important to note, however, that Shakespeare is not entirely approving of the performance by Bottom and his friends. Characterized by malapropism, misplaced pause and accent, and a lack of understanding of dramatic convention, the mechanicals'

detailed analysis of their collaboration and conflict, see John Peacock, *The Stage Designs of Inigo Jones: The European Context* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 38-43; 140-1.

¹⁷ This festival spirit under which a medieval drama was operative is explicitly pronounced by Theseus. Gently warned by both Philostrate, his master of entertainment, and Hippolyta about the poor quality of the play, Theseus insists on hearing the play by mechanics, by saying "the kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing/ Our sport shall be to take what they mistake: /And what poor duty cannot do, noble respect takes it in might, not merit"(5.1.89-92). Theseus' exposition that such a public event as theater is not a matter of skills but of strengthening the bond between the ruler and the ruled gives expression to the underlying principle of the medieval play.

performance of Pyramus and Thisbe becomes a ludicrous parody of tragic love drama. As Louis Montrose points out, the fault of their performance is all the more visible because the emerging professional actors, the Lord Chamberlain's Men in this case, enacted this comical scene, thereby forcing the audience to compare their superb performance to that of amateur actors who had gradually disappeared from the map of England (81-82).

In particular, the contrasting endings performed by Bottom and by Puck demonstrate the sharp difference between amateur and professional acting. Bottom and his fellow actors end their performance with a "Bergomask dance" instead of an epilogue because Theseus thought it was a more appropriate form of ending for their performance (5.1.348-53). The visual and bodily show by Bottom and his fellows is certainly an interesting juxtaposition to the masterful ending by Puck that concludes the whole story. As an epilogue to *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Puck's speech clearly shows what lacks in the performance by the Athenian mechanicals. With its rhyming couplets and simple words, most of which have one or two syllables, Puck's epilogue accomplishes ritualistic or choral effects, making the transition from the green world to the real one less abrupt and jarring. By asking the audience to consider the play as an "idle" "dream," if they are "offended" by it, Puck extends the governing theme of the play -- dream and imagination-- even at the last moment of the show, offering one more chance for the audience to reconsider the nature of life, theater, and dream and the relationship between them (5.1.423-38). Puck's eloquent speech weaving seamlessly

between these three different worlds and his ability to give “to aery nothing/ a local habitation and a name” clearly indicate how competent Shakespeare and his fellow actors were in the making of drama (5.1.16-7). If the mechanicals’ apology for their performance in their prologue (5.1.108-18) unwittingly reveals their ignorance of dramatic conventions, the epilogue by Puck displays the confidence of Shakespeare and his colleagues with dramatic language and form.

Shakespeare’s masterful moment creating the illusion of ending purely by means of language showcases a stellar example of how dramatic performance can be more than visual spectacle and the trappings of image. Given the historical context of iconoclasm and anti-theatrical movement, it also signifies an attempt of Renaissance playwrights and actors to develop a different kind of drama, whose poesis is not entirely dependent on visual image and sensational manipulation. Of course, there is a fundamental paradox in this anti-theatrical aesthetics because the critical stance toward sensory images always already involves its use of them. We will look further at the significance of this paradox in the next section by looking at how the movement of iconoclasm during the English civil wars simultaneously fueled not only the discourse of antitheatricality but also the theatrical spectacle of varying kinds. By examining the development of iconoclasm during the civil wars, we will be able to reach more in-depth understanding of the dynamic between antitheatricalism and Renaissance drama.

In this section, we have examined the common assumption that the iconoclastic movement of puritans led to the suppression and the eventual demise of Renaissance

drama. First, we've questioned whether cultural changes can be explained solely by the dominance of one group over others. Although bare, white walls of the church devoid of ornaments testify to the powerful force of iconoclasm, the proliferation of sacred images in other cultural domains, especially in cheap print, demonstrates that cultural changes involve complicated negotiations among interesting groups, yielding a process of transformation that cannot be attributed to the hegemonic groups alone. As O'Connell argues extensively in his book, antitheatrical tracts in Elizabeth and Jacobean period have been widely described as another war of iconoclasm led by puritan polemicists. We've closely looked at some of the famous antitheatrical tracts by Gosson and others to show that the writers were not a homogenous group that tried to promote a specific political or moral agenda. They were loosely connected in the hostile response to the burgeoning commercial theaters but this hostility, despite their moralistic rhetoric, was largely fuelled by practical and professional concerns. Of course, it would be quite misleading to deny that there were actually some puritans who condemned drama and its institution primarily from their religious or moral conviction.

But my point is that the impact of their ideological position on dramatic literature and activities has been exaggerated and exploited to justify, instead of questioning, the rigid dichotomy between drama and Puritanism. Both commercial drama and puritans represented in Elizabethan and Jacobean period new cultural and social phenomena, the visible signs of change after the Reformation that Londoners started to recognize but, due to their heterogeneity and rapid evolution, felt it difficult to grasp their nature. Just

as “puritans” had to construct their social and cultural identity by re-appropriating the already established cultural and technical resources, many of which were deeply informed by Catholic culture and aesthetics, secular drama has to secure its autonomy from religious authorities by working with them, not posing a threat to them.

One of the serious consequences that stems from misunderstanding the opposition between early modern drama and Puritanism is to obscure the positive contribution of antitheatricalism to the evolution of early modern drama. Typically caricatured as cranky old men or religious fanatics who were incapable of accepting changes of time, the antitheatrical writers were arch villains in the early modern drama history and their prejudices were considered obstacles that blocked progress. Ben Jonson’s and Shakespeare’s dramatic works, however, illustrate that early modern dramatists themselves were often willing to adopt and internalize rather than flatly refuse the discourse of anti-theatricalism. The discourse was an effective rhetoric when an individual dramatist was trying to make distinctions from other competitors or from the previous generation of the dramatists whose aesthetic practices had been increasingly viewed as problematical in Post-Reformation England. As Alan Ackerman points out, “theatre and performance studies have not been willing to see in anti-theatricalism anything but a threat and have therefore tended to defend jealously the value of theatricality against anyone who dares to look at it critically” (281). For more meaningful dialogue between drama and its criticism, “this defense mechanism must be overcome in order to recognize the productive function of anti-theatricalism in a wide

range of phenomena, from modernist closet drama to total theatre” (Ackerman 281).

Our discussion of iconoclasm and Renaissance drama, I hope, is one answer to Ackerman’s call for rethinking of antitheatricalism.

B. Iconoclasm and the English Civil Wars

Intermission: Theatricality as a Contested Site of Power

The public spectacle of the execution of the regicide in the opening of Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* has been recognized as one of the most brilliant examples that clarify the relationship between theatricality and power in early modern times. Through the lavish details and analysis of Damians the regicide in 1757, Foucault convincingly shows that the torture or the pain inflicted upon “the condemned body” during the trial and the proceeding of execution was neither random nor senseless. “It must mark the victim; [. . .] it traces around or, rather, on the very body of the condemned man signs that must not be effaced; in any case, men will remember from the point of view of the law that imposes it, public torture and execution must be spectacular, it must be seen by all almost its triumph. The very excess of the violence employed is one of the elements of the glory” (34). “Corpses burnt, ashes thrown to the winds, bodies dragged on hurdles and exhibited at the roadside” became the glory and the triumph of the “all powerful sovereign” over “the subject who has dared to violate the law” (49). Thus, in the view of Foucault, the public punishment is one of salient theatrical spaces in which the sovereign or the king affirms his eventual victory over his enemy through the mock confrontation with the opponent and the destruction of his body. If the public punishment is a

spectacle, then it is a spectacle for the king, who is powerful enough to set the course of events and ascribe their meanings to them.

The relation of power to theatricality after the publication of *Discipline and Punish* has been explored from various viewpoints. One of them is to examine public sites of theatricality that the monarchy or the state used to ostensibly represent its history and power before the public eyes. As a result, diverse social occasions and events such as weddings, court masques, and coronations have been studied to show how monarchical power maintained its legitimacy and legibility through a tactical arrangement of theatrical events. Of course, instead of focusing on the monologue of power like Foucault, some literary critics are more interested in the various ways in which individuals or specific social groups managed to voice their opinions and interests in public events and ceremonies. The oblique criticism of “the abuse of the royal prerogative” in Thomas Carew’s masque *Coelum Britannicum* in 1634 (Patterson 116), and a subtle warning by the city elders against tyrannical ruling in the 1559 coronation of Queen Elizabeth would be a few of many examples.¹⁸ But the dialogic aspects of theatricality in the public events as magnified by these critics appear not to have posed a fundamental threat to the ultimate authority and the authorship of the king. A sober and modest criticism against the abuse of kingship was tolerated and even encouraged as long as it was not disproportionately persistent and specific in its descriptions and details to disrupt the spectacle of power.

¹⁸ Arthur Kinney, *Elizabethan Backgrounds: Historical Documents of the Age of Elizabeth I*. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1975, 22-23.

This intricate politics of kingship or ownership over cultural products is well illustrated for example in Richard Helgerson's excellent studies of early modern cartography in *Forms of Nationhood*. Helgerson historically contextualizes the complicated negotiation of ownership of what is known today as Christopher Saxton's country maps from the moment of their invention to the mid seventeenth century. According to Helgerson, three different social agents took part in the map project: the cartographer Saxton, his patron Thomas Seckford, and Queen Elizabeth who authorized the survey of the country. In other words, "the queen (or, more likely, her privy council) ordered the maps, that Seckford supplied the surveyor and paid his costs, that Saxton traveled, surveyed, and drew" (109). The multiple authorships of these three participants were acknowledged on "every sheet of the 1579 atlas" which "displays the royal arms, Seckford's arms, and the inscription 'Chrstophorus Saxton descripsit'" (110). It was only "by the mid-seventeenth century" that the multiple overlap of ownership disappeared and yielded to one single name, Saxton (111). Helgerson's insight into a multiple authorship in early modern maps shows us that the monarch in early modern times did not forbid others from claiming the ownership of their collaborative works, as long as the seat of final authority was reserved for the sovereign. The success of the work rested upon the 'voluntary' participation of others so that the resulting outcome was not only to glorify the majestic power of the king but also to strengthen the communal bond between the crown and the subjects.

Although the existence of multiple voices was tolerated under the confines of the crown, the freedom of an individual was not always in a happy relation with the authority. Describing Tudor society as fundamentally theatrical in nature, Greenblatt in *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* shows how each individual had to put on a certain mask or take a given role to stay in the game of power. As in the case of Thomas More, however, performing an expected role for the pleasure of “the rich and powerful” deepens the awareness of its artificiality and generates an opposite desire to flee from a theatrical delusion of this world. Shimmering illusions and spectacles mobilized under the command of the powerful continues to be contrasted to the inner lives of early English Protestants such as Tyndale and Wyatt, who sought to find a shelter in the imagined community offered by the textural world. What is interesting to us is the fact that despite the hardship and alienation that they had to experience, More, Tyndale, and Wyatt did not actively seek to challenge the power of the crown and its right to enforce a certain role on their subjects. As Greenblatt points out in the critical reading of Tyndale’s *Obedience of a Christian Man* (1528),

Tyndale [and probably his contemporaries in a similar predicament] does not seek to set up a vanguard party that will make the necessary decisions nor to ally himself with a discontented social class or status group; such development, insofar as they happen at all, begin considerably later in the century and do not assume clear form until the following century.¹⁹

¹⁹ Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago &

The collective and massive effort to challenge the authority of the crown and its ownership over theatrical events in public was markedly visible in the English civil Wars. The following section will explore the revolutionary changes in the dialectic between theatricality and power during the English civil wars. It will study what happened to theatricality when the traditional apparatuses of power such as church, court and other public arenas ceased to support kingship and were increasingly under the attacks from diverse religious groups and individuals. While exploring the process of encroachment upon the power of the monarch, it will also look at whether any type of theatricality was mobilized to undermine the authority of the crown. If so, then how can we reconcile our findings with the English civil war being traditionally interpreted as the age of anti-theatrical impulses? By looking at this complicated deployment of theatricality, this section will argue that theatricality neither disappeared nor diminished its influence in the cultural and the public domains. On the contrary, it will posit that the displacement of theatricality from the control of the state machinery served as a catalyst for various social and religious groups to reinvent dramatic forms and performances in their own way.

Reformation, Iconography, and Iconoclasm

There are many possible ways in which to understand the process of displacement of theatricality from the state power during the civil wars. One might, for example, focus on the ways in which women preachers and prophets such as Anna

Trapnell and Elizabeth Hooton exploited public spectacle in order to negotiate not only gender politics but also the royal authority that had been established as the final judge of the theatrical experiences in public domains. Here, I choose to focus on iconoclasm as a Reformation movement and how it served to subvert the royal power and its theatrical bases that it had once supported and to which it had given strength. Focusing on iconoclasm also allows us to extend our discussion in the previous section in which we've examined the positive, instead of negative, role of iconoclasm mainly in the field of literature via the lens of anti-theatricality. This section similarly explores the positive role of iconoclasm in the formation of theatricality but is different from the previous section in the sense that it is mainly concerned with the broad implication of iconoclasm in the political struggles among various religious and social groups. By tracing the dynamic interactions over time between iconoclasm and the theatrical experience it provides, we will be able to redefine the very notion of iconoclasm that had empowered diverse social agents during early modern times to challenge an established authority and to help them reclaim their spiritual and social status in the divine drama of God.

The social practice of destroying sacred images is as old as human history itself. History offers ample examples of how sacred images of one religious group such as Buddha, Mahomet and Virgin Mary became the targets of hatred and violence from other opposing groups. Even today's western society, which appears to be safely removed from religious extremism, often finds itself repeating the destruction of the public images that had once commanded respect and admiration. When a new political

regime started to replace the previous one, people many times witnessed how the statues of defeated political leaders in public areas turned into theatrical props to celebrate the arrival of new age. In this sense, the iconoclastic movement in early modern England might be but one example of many that mark the shift of power in politics. By defining the traditional way of worship rooted in the visual as being popish and superstitious, the agents of iconoclasm during the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods helped England to invent one aspect of its national identity, which was different from its neighboring Catholic countries. But it should be noted, if one wants to grasp the peculiar and extremely complex nature of iconoclasm in early modern England, that iconoclasm was not simply the collection of monumental events emblemizing a sea-change of power but also the core of controversy the opinions about which served to distinguish between one Protestant group and another.

Of course, even before the cultural impacts of the Reformation, breaking down the idols and vile images had been considered over centuries pious acts for Christians to fulfill. But the notion of false idols and vile images was traditionally associated with pagan gods and their sacred images. What was new with the arrival of the Reformation movement was that the target of iconoclasm turned its direction inwardly to the church itself and the traditional ways of Christian worship. In the name of purifying the wrongs of traditional devotions, for example, the Reformists vehemently drove the worship of saints out of the church and denounced the supernatural power of the relics as the result of ignorance or human frailty cultivated by the Catholic clergy and their fabricated

illusions. Against the common enemy -- the traditional church service and religious practices backed by Catholic clergy -- the Reformists spoke in the same voice but when it comes to what the Reformed church should be like, protestant groups often failed to see eye to eye. As Carle Eire lucidly explains, Lutheran Reformists were more tolerant about the use of Christian images than those of Calvin and Zwingli, who wanted to “make iconoclasm a strict command for all Christians” (71). Even among the same Christian group, some difference of opinion was inevitable when the general iconoclastic prescription was to be applied to everyday practice such as the use of secular images in a non-spiritual situation.²⁰ This potentially dangerous fluidity of post-Reformation iconoclasm, as we shall discuss later in length, heightened during the English civil wars when the power of monarchy was no longer able to serve the center of the Reformation movement and thereby to contain its subversive potential.

Focusing on the role of royal power in a discussion of iconoclastic movement during the seventeenth century appears to be less straightforward, especially given the academic trends that tend to emphasize the iconographic rather than iconoclastic aspects of kingship and its public displays. Literary historians are more accustomed to discussing the spectacular and ritual aspects of royal ceremonies and their iconography, which sharply contrast to the grim and somber tone of puritan culture. Especially when one overemphasizes the conflicts between Puritan and Royalists, eventually exploded in

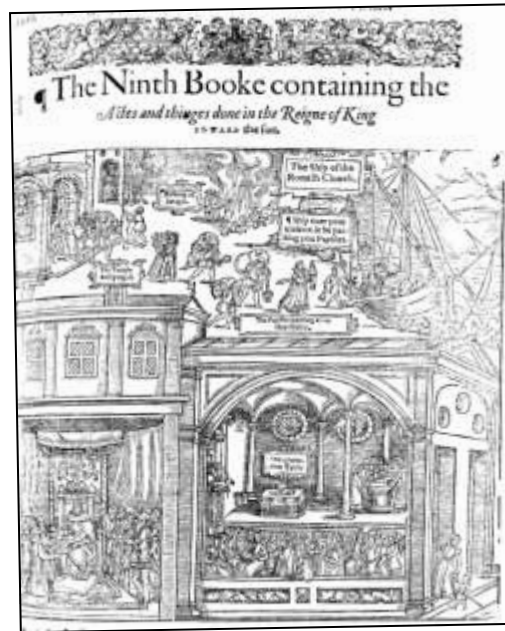
²⁰ The cohabitation of diverse interpretations about the story of Phinehas in the same religious group, as detailed by Martin Dzelzainis, is one small example showing the room of freedom and uncertainty in the application of Godly principles to everyday life. See “‘Incendiaries of the State’: Charles I and tyranny,” *The Royal Image* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University 1999), 87.

the form of the civil wars, the ideological differences between these two groups appear larger than they actually were. The mythology of kingship during the early modern times was certainly theatrical and in some sense ritualistic as recent critics point out. But more important, in light of our reconsideration of the dynamics between early modern politics and theatricality, is that the invention of royal iconography was an attempt to displace (rather than fortify) the sacredness invested in Catholic rituals and relics with the new iconic symbols, which had been constructed and supported by humanist and Reformist groups. For example, Queen Elizabeth's ceremonial entry into the city of London, one day before her coronation of 15 January 1559, explicitly links her to the biblical figure of Deborah, a female prophet and judge, who ruled Israel despite being the weaker sex. In this civic event, it was not Queen Elizabeth alone who was transported into a biblical time.²¹ Praised as New Jerusalem, the city of London was also transformed into a mythic space in which the allegorical figures of Truth and Time appeared to offer the gift of the Bible to the new Deborah. Weaven through the mutual participation of the queen, the city authorities and citizens, this allegorical event firmly grounds its significance in the Bible and the Biblical history, which reveals God's favor to England for allowing it to be ruled by a Protestant ruler.

Highlighting the role of a Protestant ruler in sacred history is also found in John Foxe's woodcut placed in the opening of "Ninth booke" (figure 4).

²¹ See Carol Blessing, "Elizabeth I as Deborah the Judge: Exceptional Women of Power," *Goddesses and Queens : The Iconography of Elizabeth I*, eds. Annaliese F. Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (Manchester, UK ; New York: Manchester University Press, 2007), 20.

The woodcut captures a victorious moment when Edward VI became a ruler of England and glorifies the years of his government within the context of iconoclastic reforms.



<Figure 4: *Book of Martyrs*, Vol. 2 (1583), 1294>

The Bible handed over by the King Edward to the kneeling prelates at the lower left of the painting symbolically represents Edward as a Protestant ruler. The impact of the Reformation guided by the stewardship of King Edward is dramatically portrayed in the rest of the painting. The scene in the upper panel shows the group of “Papistes packing away theyr Paltry” to get on the board of “the ship of Romish Church” in the midst of smoke and fire which were destroying popish images and ceremonial objects. The

church service depicted at the lower right panel underscores the Reformed way of worship with a focus on preaching, Bible reading, and baptism, noticeably purged of the ceremonial objects or paintings usually occupying the church interior before the iconoclastic campaign.

From the view of royal iconography nourished through the mutual efforts of both the royal and the Reformist groups during the last quarter of the sixteenth century, the royal image of King Charles was problematical in many different ways. Instead of actively participating in public or civic events through which diverse social groups spoke their concerns directly to the ruling king, King Charles preferred to interact and work closely with the privileged few.²² Even in the inner court, entry to the royal presence was tightly regulated, limiting the channels of communication between Charles and his servants in a formal and somewhat conservative manner. The famous equestrian portrait of King Charles in *Charles I Riding through a Triumphal Arch* (1633) created by the king's painter Sir Anthony Van Dyck bespeaks the king's preference to lofty solitude and his emotional distance from ordinary people.

In *Charles I on Horseback with Monsieur de St Antoine* (1633),²³ King Charles I is riding through the triumphal arch with no companion other than a lone servant, M. de St Antoine, a prominent courtier well known for his masterful art of horsemanship. The

²² For detailed accounts of King Charles and his courtiers' lukewarm stance in traditional civic events and royal progress, see Michelle A White, *Henrietta Maria and the English Civil Wars* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 21-22; John Peacock, "The Visual Image of Charles I," *The Royal Image*, 176.

²³ The printed image of this Van Dyck's masterpiece can be found, for example, in James Lawson, *Van Dyck: Paintings and Drawings* (New York: Prestel, 1999), 83.

painting praises his majestic power through the voluntary obedience of the horse symbolizing powerful –therefore potentially disorderly- passion. The mighty horse, although conveying the masculinity of King Charles, can be viewed as the aesthetic displacement of unruly social power, the conquering of whose violence requires strict discipline and finesse. Instead of crowding the canvas with multiple figures and weapons typical of a battle scene, Van Dyck minimizes the details that can disrupt the viewers' admiration to the triumphant arrival of Charles in armor with no visible marks of wounds or bruises. King Charles' upward gaze and meditative aspect emphasize the strength of his inner self impenetrable from outside forces, and therefore mystifies his triumph as a manifestation of God's grace to him, instead of suggesting it as an outcome of laborious efforts. As if the dark clouds of disorder are driven away at the instant appearance of sunrise, the presence of King Charles commands the arrival of peace with no traces of struggles left behind.

As masterfully exemplified in Van Dyck's portrayal of King Charles, the mystical power of the crown and its ability to maintain the peace was a dominant feature of royal iconoclasm and courtly performances in 1630s. In *The Triumph of Peace* (1633) by James Shirley, for example, after the vanishing of mischievous anti-masquers, three sisters from heaven (Irene, Eunomia, Dice) were on stage to solemnize the glorious achievements by King Charles' personal rule.

To you great King and Queen, whose smile
Doth scatter blessings through this isle,

To make it best
 And wonder of the rest,
 We pay the duty of our birth,
 Proud to wait upon that earth
 Whereon you move,
 Which shall be nam'd,
 And by your chaste embraces fam'd,
 The paradise of love.
 Irene, plant thy olives here,
 Thus warm'd, at once they'll bloom and bear;
 Eunomia, pay thy light,
 While Dice, covetous to stay,
 Shall throw her silver wings away
 To dwell within your sight.²⁴

The word 'rest' in the passage is deliberately equivocal: "the rest" can be casually read as 'the remainder' of the world looking at England in awe and wonder but it could also mean 'the spiritual peace or tranquility' that England is blessed with under King Charles.

What makes this ode for peace more interesting is the ways in which the idea of peace is configured and expressed. The glory of peace and prosperity is rendered neither by imperial prowess or pride over other nations, nor by the godly zeal to pursue the

²⁴ James Shirley, "The Triumph of Peace," *A Book of Masques*, ed. Clifford Leech (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 298-99.

Reformation program, but rather by the pleasure of domestic love and harmony between royal couple. The domestic imagery is further strengthened because the speakers echo the state-family analogy popular in the early modern times to assert their relationship to the monarchy not simply in terms of the obligation of subjects to sovereign but also of offspring to parents (“We pay the duty of our birth”). As “a Genius or angelic person” is on stage to introduce the sixteen masquers –“the sons of Peace, Law, and Justice”- for the opening of climax, the fame of “Royal Pair” is said to be lasting in ever-green branches of “the Island” (i.e. Britain) that the couple gave a birth to and nourished in a spirit of grace and harmony.

Live, Royal Pair, and when your sands are spent
 With Heaven’s and your consent,
 Though late, from your high bowers,
 Look down on what was yours,
 For till old Time his glass hath hurl’d
 And lost it, in the ashes of the world,
 We prophesy you shall be read, and seen,
 In every branch, a King or Queen.²⁵

The lavish praise of the royal couple in *The Triumph of Peace* is not purely accidental: in fact, it represents the unique aspect of King Charles’ iconography. As some critics point out, Charles’ iconography can be distinguished from others in that his iconography is

²⁵ James Shirley, 300-301.

deeply centered in the emphasis of his love for his children and for his wife, Henrietta Maria (White 23; Strong 70; Sharpe 188). Caroline masques reflect this shift of iconography by exploiting Charles' fatherly and marital love toward his family as the central icon of national peace and prosperity.²⁶ Of course, the domestic elements growing stronger in Caroline masques are not to be necessarily argued as the emergence of something akin to the modern family. On the contrary, they often served to enhance the imperial stature of Stuart monarchy and to justify its ruling as natural as a family bond.

In this regard, the paradigm of platonic love that was famously in vogue in the Caroline Court, as clearly exemplified by William Davenant in *The Temple of Love* (1634), warrants our further attention because the metaphysical or ideal dimension endowed in platonic love enables the royal subjects to embrace emotional bond without the guilt associated with amorous love. In *The Temple of Love*, the three "noble Persian youths" (298) enter the stage to mark the end of anti-masque, setting the tone for the climatic appearance of Indamora Queen of Narsinga, an allegorical figure representing Queen Henrietta Maria as a patron of art and high culture. When Indamora is in center stage to welcome the Persian youths in the Temple of Love they had been in quest of,

²⁶ Relative peace that England had enjoyed during 1630s can be better appreciated in juxtaposition with the violence and blood that other neighboring countries had to shed at a breakout of the Thirty Years War. As for recent studies on the role of the Thirty Years War in England's court culture and its nation building process during the seventeenth century, see Caroline M Hibbard, *Charles I and the Popish Plot*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983), 24-135. Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles*, 5-112.

the following song is performed to introduce Indamora as the guardian of the “sacred temple” (286):

Let then your soft, and nimble feet
 Lead and in various figures meet
 Those strange knights, who though they came
 Seduc'd at first by false desire,
 You'll kindle in their breasts a fire
 Shall keep love warm, yet not inflame.

At first they wear your beauties' prize
 Now offer willing sacrifice
 Unto the Virtues of the mind,
 And each shall wear, when they depart,
 A lawful though a loving heart,
 And wish you still both strict and kind.²⁷

The song depicts the bond that ties Indomara and “those strange knights” together as mutual and voluntarily. Their voluntary commitment (“willing sacrifice”) to the virtue of the mind is rewarded with the purification of their mind of earthly concerns and burning passion – their “breasts” will be free from “false desire” and instead be blessed with sacred “love” whose “fire” is “warm, yet not inflame.” The relationship between

²⁷ D'Avenant, William. “The Temple of Love: A Masque,” *The Dramatic Works of Sir William D'Avenant*, (Edinburgh: W. Paterson, 1872), 301-2.

Indomara and the young nobles is clearly ideal, a noble standard that the audience of the masque is encouraged to emulate. But this ideal relationship is appealing to the audience by mimicking the warmth and protection of parental love offered to children and the obedience the children are expected to show toward their superiors. In some sense, it is ironic that the Persian youths, who had left their home and started to pursue a new world and experience, found themselves ending up with a praise of pure love where motherhood figured in the character of Indomara is at the center of its cult. The journey toward an external world is complicated in this way and collapsed into a rite of passage, where the youths join a bigger (and better) community of their choice in which a Queen as the icon of Platonic love reigns.

In the eyes of Reformists, this new attempt of authorizing the kingship on a basis of something quite remote from their concerns (e.g. family affection; platonic love; noble pursuit after peaceful mind) might have been felt as problematical largely because it attested to the lack of zeal and enthusiasm on the part of the royal inner circle about the cause of Protestantism, a telling sign of the increasing departure from the royal iconography of the previous generation that had been established through the ongoing dialogue between the monarch and his Protestant subjects. By restricting the channels of communication from diverse social groups and by insisting on art and drama as the privileged domains of the selected few, King Charles and his followers put themselves at risk of estrangement from others who were reluctant to participate in the new cult of domesticity, love and peace. In addition, in order to make this new cult effective beyond

the scope of courtiers and royal subjects, it was necessary for English people to accept wholeheartedly Queen Henrietta Maria as someone whom they could trust and put their faith in, so that the idealization of her in royal performances would be felt less controversial. Her open commitment to Catholicism in real life, however, made it difficult for radical Protestants to observe the flattering picture of her in royal masques without concern of popery. Instead of subscribing to the general sentiment of the public, the Catholic Queen often expressed her religious views in an open manner and was active in enlarging the number of Catholics and Catholic sympathizers especially in the court. As a result, top court officials such as Walter Montague and Henry Jermyn became Catholic converts in 1635 and 1636 and more conversions of a large number of courtiers and noblewomen followed. The opening of the Queen's extravagant chapel at Somerset House in 1636 was also unnerving (at least to anti-Catholic groups) for its ability to spark public attention: as Erin Griffey explains, "visitors thronged to see the mesmerizing decorative scheme, replete with paintings and a special sacristy" and this increased public attention eventually forced King Charles to "close the queen's chapel [. . .] to English subjects" (182).

Of course, Queen Henrietta Maria's religious orientation was only one facet of many that made Caroline iconography less appealing to Protestant churchgoers. Around this time, the archbishop Laud introduced to the Church of England a series of innovations emphasizing ritual and formal aspects of Church life, and many orthodox Calvinists viewed these changes as a dangerous slippery slope to popery. In addition,

King Charles' lukewarm support of the Palatine cause, his apparent leniency toward recusants, and the increased traffic of ambassadors between Rome and England, all combined, strongly suggested that King Charles and his followers were less interested in godly causes. Within this socio-political context, it is not surprising that Charles' iconography failed to exert influence over the godly.

During King Charles' personal rule, however, the growing tension between the Crown and the godly was often submerged and only subtly apparent, partly due to strong censorship and his ability to keep parliament inoperative. But as England entered the turmoil of wars during the 1640s, militant Protestants were able to express their views more openly. The alleged charges by parliament against Queen Henrietta Maria as reported in the newsbook *The Parliament Scout* (1643) demonstrates a different dynamic between political parties.

That Shee hath countenanced and maintained that horrid and execrable Rebellion now on foot in Ireland, whereby many thousand Protestants have been barbarously murdered. [. . .] The other seven Charges were to this effect: 1. That Henrietta Maria had traitorously and wickedly conspired with Popish Priests, to subvert the Protestant Religion, and to introduce Popery, and for these ten years she had advanced the power and jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome. 2. That she hath incited and maintained a war against the Subjects of Scotland, and caused monies to be raised amongst the Papists, for advancement and maintenance of that

war. 3. Hath by severall wayes and means traitorously assisted and maintained this unnatural warre against the Parliament and Kingdome of England. 4. Hath provided monies and armes, pawned and sold the Jewels of the Realm. 5. Hath brought over with her, not only Armes and Ammunition, but strangers and forraigners, and is her selfe at the head of Popish Army. 6. Hath harboured and protected notorious persons detected and accused of high Treason by the two houses of Parliament, namely George Lord Digby, Henry Piercy, Henry Jermin, and others. 7. That she hath put ill-affected persons in great places and offices of trust, whereby to advance the Popish Party.²⁸

The passage from *The Parliament Scout*, if compared alongside other contemporary newsbooks and pamphlets during the 16040s, does not show notable difference in the representation of the Queen Henrietta Maria.²⁹ In the polemic culture of 1640s, attacking the Catholic Queen was not uncommon and *The Parliament Scout* was one of polemical writings that supported the cause of parliament. But the radical voice against the Queen, it should be noted, was not always as freely expressed as in the 1640s. On the contrary, verbal assault against a royal person was a serious crime in King Charles' days, which was condemned and punished as high treason. In the year 1632, when King Charles still managed to rule England without parliament, William Prynne published his

²⁸ *The Parliament Scout*, 1, 20 June 1643, 4-5, 10/E.56 (7).

²⁹ For detailed discussion about the negative representations of the Queen Henrietta in anti-royalist pamphlets and newsbooks, see Michelle White, "In the News: Henrietta Maria and English Civil War News Culture," *Henrietta Maria and the English Civil Wars* (Aldershot, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 91-121.

infamous antitheatrical tract, *Histrion-Mastix*, and was convicted of a high treason not because of his excessive attack against public theaters but because of the ferocity of his attacks against “Women-actors” who “speake publikely on stage” and of calling them as “notorious whores.” Despite Prynne’s plea that his remarks were not targeted against the Queen, who happened to be on stage for Walter Montague’s *The Shepherd’s Paradise* in the similar time frame, the Star Chamber ruled that Prynne’s impersonal attack on women on the public stage was a thin disguise intended to veil his contempt for the royal person (Patterson 113-15). After the trial, Prynne was “disbarred, expelled from Lincoln’s Inn, stripped of his Oxford degree, fined £5,000, imprisoned at the king’s pleasure, and forced to stand in the pillory while the state executioner cropped his ears and branded on his cheeks the letter S.L. (for, Seditious Libeller)” (White 27). As William Prynne’s case shows, casting the royal family in a negative light was a dangerous venture that could take its toll on those responsible for the ‘seditious’ publication. In this sense, the unchecked circulation during the 1640s of what might have been banned and burnt in King Charles’ period strongly points to not only the collapse of censorship but also the significant decline in King Charles’ ability to impose his chosen images onto the public domains.

If a King’s power, as Greenblatt suggests in his study of Thomas More, can be measured by “the ability to impose one’s fictions upon the world” (*Renaissance Self-Fashioning* 13), the English civil war period represents a moment of crisis in which King Charles as a privileged signifier in the national symbolic order has lost his ability to

control the signs of representation. One of the weak points that undermined the symbolic power of King Charles was his ties with Catholic Europe, established by his marriage to Henrietta Maria. The Catholic power outside England was the most threatening storm in the view of Protestants that could sink the ship of the Church to the rocky bottom of chaos. With the outbreaks of the Bishop Wars and the Irish Rebellion in the early years of 1640s, the national hysteria against Catholics was at its height. The Long Parliament, instead of seeking to dismiss this heightened anxiety as groundless, took an active role to stir up the hostile sentiment against Catholic parties by maintaining the existence of the popish plot. On 7 November 1640, for example, in the opening speech to a House of Commons Pym insisted that there was “a design to alter the kingdom both in religion and government” (189). Pym claimed that “the papists’ party” and “the corrupt part of the clergy” were behind this design, and that their actions to return England to the Catholic fold became more bold and daring: “Steps of these things that have proceeded in motion, first softly, now by strides, which are near their end if they be not prevented” (190).

The shocking confession of the recusant John Brown in 1641 also sparked public attention to the clandestine popish activities at the royal court as well as the church government. The pamphlet, *The Confession of John Browen a Jesvite in the Gate-house* (1641), published right after the interrogation of Browne by the parliamentary committee, not only provides a shot list of Jesuits and Pro-Catholics in London and at the royal court but also highlighted their ability to conceal their real character and purpose. Their

smooth infiltration into the heart of England is represented in the story of “one Seignior George, “ who “was appointed by the Pope to inform him of all important businesse of England and Scotland” (sig. A3^r).

This man [Seignior George] at Paris quits his Priests Robes, and drest himself in secular apparel: covering his shaven crown with a great Periwig, & writes to Father Philips, to be the primum mobile, and Director of all who send to him at Paris, as to an Italian Gentleman, desirous to see these Kingdomes. That coming to London, he lodged first at the Italian Ordinary in the Strand; but being so much resorted to by persons of great quality, he removed to Seignior Germine's House neare the Exchange, as you passé to Covent-garden.³⁰

The popish plot as weaved by both Browne and Pym was overtly melodramatic and polemic to the effect that the public was not simply informed but also emotionally swayed into taking action against popish agents. The motifs of disguise and deceit were repeatedly used to dramatize the dangerous ignorance of English people over their own fortune. Of course, the sensational dramatization of political events was not new, and the popish plot itself was in circulation as early as 1605 when the assassination plot to kill King James and MPs in the parliament was discovered with the finding of gunpowder. To some degree, the parliament leaders during the English civil wars recycled old repertoires of political expression that had been proven to spark public interests. These

³⁰ *The Confession of John Browne a Jesuite in the Gate-house* (London: 1641), sig. A3^v

theatrical(ized) events show that many of the public controversies during the civil wars, although presented in a more urgent manner, were rooted in the same fear of Catholic conspiracy that earlier generations had been struggling with.

At the same time, however, we should note that the Long Parliament's dramatic representation of national politics was fundamentally different from that of previous times at least in the role given to the monarchy. As pointed out in earlier parts of this chapter, the crown before the 1630s was the center of protestant faith around which English people were urged to unite and to fight against the antichrist papal power. However, in the 1640s, as parliament started to assert its authority and ability to rule the nation, regardless of the king's wishes, the traditional glorification of the royal personage in national drama was accordingly subverted and challenged.

One of the clearest examples that reflected the change of representational dynamics in national politics was the scandalous publication of King Charles' private letters. At the battle of Nasby (June 1645), the parliament captured the king's private cabinet and found in it his secret correspondence and papers. In the same year, the parliament sent the collection of these letters to the press with the editors' annotations included. The publication of the private letters, as many critics point out, was a fatal blow to the royal image because "the captured correspondence demonstrated that it was he [King Charles] who made policy, and indeed dictated all the most objectionable policies: the quest for military aid from foreign powers, promises of toleration for English and even Irish Catholics in return for military support, and contempt for

representative assemblies and peace negotiations alike” (Hirst 212). With the evidence of the letters, it became clear that the King Charles, not his supposed evil councilors, was truly accountable for the misrule of the country. What makes the publication of the letters significant in light of our discussion, however, is not simply the damage to the reputation of King Charles. More importantly, the publication illustrates how the deployment of the same theatricality and language traditionally used for the glory of kingship can be used to discredit it.

The parliament’s efforts to turn the private correspondences between the royal couple into a public spectacle are clearly marked in the very title of the book, *The King’s Cabinet Opened* (1645). Protected from the intrusions of the strangers until the parliament’s seizure of it, the royal furniture partakes of sacredness ascribed to the King’s body. By describing the reading of the King Charles’s private letters as the opening of the royal space, the editors are deliberate in creating an illusion of voyeurism through which the act of reading is imaginatively merged with the act of intrusion into the royal chamber. The editors’ attempts to metaphorically align the act of reading with the trespass into King Charles’ private property continue all the more blatantly in the following passage:

the King himself has not appeared with an open face in the business, but now by Gods good providence the traverse Curtain is drawn, and the King writing to Ormond, and the Queen, what they must not disclose, is presented upon the stage. God grant that the drawing of this Curtain may

bee as fatall to Popery, and all Antichristian heresie here now, as the rending of the vaile was to the Jewish Ceremonies in Judea, at the expiration of our Savior.³¹

Different from traditional royal iconography, the scene denies Charles a kingly privilege of choosing where and when to display himself before the public. The curtain is raised not for the glory of the king but to see the naked face of King Charles in his own private moment. In this way, *The King's Cabinet Opened* defies the king's authority not only by capturing and publishing his private letters without his consent but also by depicting him as a man helplessly exposed to the eyes of the public.

More interesting is the iconoclastic and messianic language that the editors used to draw support from the public. They defend their intrusions into the King's private life in the context of sacred history by arguing that the public disclosure of the letters will be a fatal blow to "popery, and all Antichristian heresie here now." The biblical imagination reaches its climax in the last phrase where the ending of old Judaism through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is echoed to establish the significance of the parallel between the veil of the temple in Judea and the curtain behind the royal doors in England. As Elaine Glaser lucidly explains, Judaism in the 1630s and 1640s was a contested site of political struggle between ceremonists (conformists) and anti-ceremonists (puritans). The Laudian clergy often defended their emphasis on church ceremonies and rituals by referencing the historical examples of Jewish worship in the time of Old Testament

³¹ *The King's Cabinet Opened* (London: 1645), sig. A4^v

Israel. “Puritans,” on the other hand, opposed “the use of Jewish precedents to justify church ceremonies” and often equated Jewish ceremonies with “Popish ceremonies” in their “anti-ceremonist polemic ” (Glaser 76). Given this historical context, then, the editors’ biblical reference to the ripped veil of Judea temple is an attempt to portray the discovery of Charles’ secret letter as a sign of God’s intervention and to determine its significance according to the cosmic drama written by God’s hands.

If both *The King’s Cabinet Opened* and *The Confession of John Brown* showcase the explosive power and dynamic impact of print in the shaping of popular theatrical experience, the examination of the public events launched by the parliament during this time reveals that the parliament’s exploitation of theatrical experience in a battle for symbolic authority was not confined solely to the use of print materials. In 1643, Long Parliament created the committee for the Demolition of Monuments of Superstition and Idolatry with Sir Robert Harley, a leading Presbyterian, sitting as chair. The committee took a central role throughout the civil war period of orchestrating and launching more vigorous, yet controlled, attacks against what they considered idolatrous objects or images. It was by order of this committee that in early May of 1643 the famous Cheapside Cross was finally demolished.

Erected in the thirteen century as one of the Eleanor crosses to commemorate the wife of Edward I, the Cheapside Cross, since the Reformation, had been widely considered an idolatrous relic of the old religion and increasingly became the target of iconoclasts. The niches of the Cross contained “statue[s] of saints, apostles, kings and

bishops, and a Virgin and child” and its top was decorated with “a gilded cross and a dove representing the Holy Ghost” (Spraggon 42). When Long Parliament demolished the cross, they were careful to orchestrate the process of demolition in order to make the public not only involved in the historical act of iconoclasm but also understand its significance. As John Vicars described, “many thousands” came to watch the spectacle, and the tearing down of the cross was “guarded and solemnized with Bands of Souldiers, Sounding their Trumpets, and shooting off their peeeces, as well as shouting-out with their voices, and echoing out their joyfull acclamations at the happie downfall of Antichrist in England” (Spraggon, quoted on p. 159). After the eventual collapse of the cross, according to Vicars, a huge bonfire was made “whereunto the leaden god, saints & Popes were cast & there melted” (Spraggon, quoted on p. 119).

Through publication of pamphlets, before and after the downfall of the cross, parliamentary propagandists or sympathizers also sought to publicize the significance of pulling down the cross. Richard Overton, for example, in *Articles of High Treason Exhibited against Cheap-side Cross* (1642), uses dialogues and personifications to create a dramatic situation in which the cross is pictured as a person charged with idolatry and papacy. In the play pamphlet, Overton certainly shows his bias against the cross by calling it a “Romish popish Idoll,” “Babylonish Cross,” or “Idolatrous Cross” and by representing the decision to end its life as deriving from the will of the people (“Vox populi hath doom’d thee to thy end,/They’ll let thee live no longer to amend” 4).

A more orthodox puritan voice, Loveday, urged the necessity of demolishing the cross in the context of biblical history. In *An Answer to the Lamentation of Cheapside Cross* (1642), Loveday argued that the age of Antichrist came to an end and the new Israel, England, must prepare itself for the arrival of millennium by destroying its “Dagon.”

Because it [the Cheapside Cross] is in its own nature a monument of Idolatry, and may sute wel with an idolatrous place, and may be compared to Dagon, spoken of in I, Sam 5. And the beginning, which when the Arke came nere he [God] fell down flat. Intimating unto us that wheresoever the Arke of God comes all Idols and idolatry must be done away: now we have great Idols and idolatry must be done away: now we have great cause to hope that our Arke is coming home again which the Philstines have so kept from us, and therefore good reason dumb idols should fall before him.³²

For Loveday, the destruction of the Cheapside Cross is part of sacred history, a necessary step to conclude a cosmic drama in which God will defeat the Antichrist and his evil kingdom and rule the earth.

The theatrical features we observe in the iconoclastic practices against the Cheapside Cross were found in other official iconoclastic activities sanctioned by Parliament. According to Julie Spraggon, the August 1643 Ordinance and the May 1644

³² Samuel Loveday, *An Answer to the Lamentation of Cheap-Side Crosse* (London: 1642), sig. A2^r.

Ordinance made it clear that “offending objects were not merely to be ‘taken away and abolished’” but instead “were specifically required to be defaced” (76). The act of defacement was publicly performed, highly suggesting that “it was not enough merely to remove from sight the objects” targeted “but they must also be seen to be destroyed” (Spraggon 81). The intent to mock the defeated enemy was also apparent in the destruction of the statue of King Charles in 1649. Immediately after the execution of Charles, the statue at the Royal Exchange “was beheaded, its scepter removed, and the legend inscribed: ‘*Exit tyrannus Regnum ultimus, anno primo restitutor libertatis Angliae 1648*’” (Spraggon 81). In this way, the statue, once used to show off the power of King Charles, was turned into the monument for a new political regime, attesting to a change in power structure and the ownership of state apparatuses.

The parliament’s public events as examined above attest to the strong correlation between theatricality and iconoclastic acts. This correlation, however, often goes unnoticed or downplayed as accidental because puritans’ iconoclasm is notoriously associated with the massive destruction of paintings and other valuable cultural artifacts. Their hatred of visual images has been understood as the prime mover of their iconoclastic acts. But this naïve understanding fails to consider that the puritan polemicists during early modern times pushed the conventional boundaries of idolatry (and visual images) and continued to expand them to question every human invention. The evolutionary history of iconoclasm shows its critical attitude toward the established boundaries between the sacred and the secular, thereby according to Andrew Collier,

eventually wiping out the distinctions between the two. Although it is lengthy, the passage from Collier is worthwhile to quote here as it provides a rare insight into what has been neglected in the scholarly discussion of early modern iconoclasm:

Luther proclaimed the priesthood of all believers and the ubiquity of the body of Christ, but retained images, clergy, sacraments. Protestants clergy were now learned ministers, not sacred priests, but the radicals wanted an open ministry as well as an open priesthood. Calvinists practised iconoclasm, but retained ministers, churches, sacraments, and of course, the Holy book. Of the sects which have survived to the present day, the Quakers took the process furthest. Ministers are deprecated for setting themselves up as shepherds of such as are not sheep; churches are mere 'steeple houses' (an expression Bunyan also uses); the sacraments foreshadowed an inner process which renders them superfluous; as to the written word: 'Christ said this and the apostles said that, but what canst thou say?' The seriousness of Fox's antipathy to the sacred/secular divide is well illustrated by his objection to the greeting 'good day,' since every day God sends is equally holy.³³

Seen in this way, the history of iconoclasm is nothing other than the growing tendency of deconstructive social practice that a certain religious group applied to challenge the targeted opponents. During this process, an object, an image and even a social custom

³³ Andrew Collier. *Christianity and Marxism* (London; New York: Routledge, 2001), 59.

that was once considered sacred and holy could be challenged and condemned by the polemic of iconoclasm as something ungodly and sacrilegious. In this sense, iconoclastic acts have a strong potential to empower the less privileged to challenge established authorities and customs.

As I pointed out in the previous section on Foucault and Greenblatt, the iconoclastic tendency to resist established power was present already in the time before the civil war. But the iconoclastic attacks remained minimal or benign in the time of pre-civil war days, largely because the symbolic power endowed on the king as head of the Church of England and the state was still in operation. The English civil wars significantly altered this dynamic between the king and his subjects by redefining the role of King Charles in iconoclastic discourse, and eventually opened the door for disenfranchised social groups to self-fashion their collective identity through the performance of the divine message in the form of prophetic writing or sermon. The remaining of this chapter will discuss how individuals or groups, not associated with the court or the parliament, employed theatrical imagination to practice their own iconoclastic acts. To be more specific, I will analyze Abiezer Cooppe's writing, especially his famous *Fiery Flying Rolls*, in order to showcase how iconoclastic, social practice trickled down from elite circles to lower classes and how iconoclasm during this process has been radicalized to be a critique of not only social hierarchy but also of spiritual and literary forms.

A Reading of Abiezer Cooppe's Fiery Flying Rolls

As I have shown in an earlier section, iconoclasm as a deconstructive social practice often involved theatrical acts and performance. But it should be also noted that iconoclasm in the time of civil war did not simply recycle the traditional mode of theatricality. Iconoclastic polemicists during this time characterized their opponents as the forces of the antichrist while considering themselves as chosen by God. The gaining popularity of millennialism during this time encouraged the polemic writers to magnify the significance of their struggles more than they might in ordinary times.³⁴ They believed that the history they were making would be the last stage of the thousand-year against Satan before Christ's second coming. In this way, within the discourse of iconoclasm, the current world becomes the cosmic drama by God in which the final victory over their opponents was clearly ordained. This dramatic imagination and plotting of the political affairs, of course, were not exclusively used by the parliament and their polemicists only. Many radical religious congregations such as Levellers, Diggers and Quakers used this theatrical model to voice their radical political and religious views. Abiezer Cooppe's *Fiery Flying Rolls* is one of the prominent examples using "the theatrical conception of millennial history" to justify an iconoclastic performance (Loewenstein 11).

³⁴ As for the detailed discussion about the theatrical conception intrinsic to Puritan millennialism, see David Loewenstein, "The Drama of History in the Early Revolutionary Prose," *Milton and the Drama of History: Historical Vision, Iconoclasm, and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge, [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 8-34.

For the parliament, the tyranny of King Charles and his innovations in church practices and divine worship were the idols to be destroyed before the second coming of Jesus Christ. But in Coppe's "A Fiery Flying Roll," all external power and its materialism became the target of iconoclasm. Characterizing God as "that mighty Leveller," Coppe said that God will be "coming (yeat even at the doores) to Levell in good earnest, to Levell to some purpose, to Levell with a witnesse, to Levell the Hills with the Valleyes, and to lay the Mountain low"(Coppe 87). This apocalyptic force does not stop at an utter leveling of geographical distinctions. It continues to destroy social and class distinctions of the current English society: "the LOFTINESSE of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be laid low" and "his Idols of Silver, and Idols of Gold" will be destroyed (Coppe 87). Coppe's lamentation against the worship of idols and silver becomes historically specific when he says in the persona of God, "O my back, my shoulders. O Tythes, Excize, Taxes, Pollings . . . I've heared, I have heard, the groaning of my people" (Coppe 93). The grievances of people against ruling elites as specified by Coppe here obviously echo the previous outcries of the Levellers against the Rump Parliament and the State of the Council. Although Coppe's radical stance on the current sociopolitical system aligned him with the Leveller movement, his emphasis on inwardness distinguishes him from the Levellers, who attempted to materialize their political and religious agenda by means of military force. Recalling that "Sword-levelling is not my [God's] principle," Coppe affirms that the triumph of God over evil comes with the victory of inner spirit over outward forms (Coppe 94). The targets of his

reform are directed to the outward forms of Christian worship that has been used to perpetuate the tyranny of “proud Lucifer” (i.e. elite groups) and the popularity of “the wel-favoured Harlots” (i.e. sycophant clergy). The veneration of the scripture, the Communion at church service and other “formall grace” are all attacked for the same reason that they are simply “[external] things that Are,” disconnected from inner spirit (107; 106).

One may wonder how the criticism of outward forms can be considered iconoclastic. Although Coppe did not explicitly explain the logical connection between the two in *A Fiery Flying Roll*, the worship misplaced upon certain material things is potentially within the ambit of iconoclastic accusation. The Quaker pamphlet *A Rod Discovered, Found, and Set Forth to Whip the Idolaters* (1657) by Henry Clark, for example, explicitly identifies “the houses of high places, falsly called churches; the two universities, Cambridge and Oxford, (and their ministers, which are made by man, and not of God) and their ministers maintenance (not the ministers of Christ) which is portions of lands, tythes, offrings, oblations, obventions, and great houses for a certain dwelling place on the earth, and forms of oathes” as “the fruit of idolaters, and the abomination of the heathen” (Front Page). Clark’s pamphlet shows that not only pictorial images and popish objects but also corrupted social practices and institutions could be criticized as the acts of false worshipping. Nevertheless, critics often failed to position the implications of Coppe’s stance on established Churches and mainstream Protestant practices in the context of an iconoclastic milieu during the latter half of the

seventeenth century. Instead, critics often viewed his radical voice as influenced by pantheistic antinomianism.³⁵ Obviously, Coppe's refusal to distinguish the good from the bad, the sacred from the secular appears to endorse a pantheistic view that everything is (at least potentially) sacred. However, this interpretation of Coppe's writing, as Collier points out, is incompatible with his overriding message that "God is working in history, and working differently from how he had been working before" (Collier 61). As a prophetic voice in *A Fiery Flying Roll*, Coppe alerts readers to the urgency of the current situation and urges them to quick action:

Behold, behold, I have told you. Take it to heart, else you'll repent every
veine of your heart. For your own sake take heed. Its my last warning. For
the cry of the poore, for the oppression of the needy. For the horrid
insolency of proud man, who will dare to sit in my throne, and judge

³⁵ For example, Nigel Smith looks at Coppe's writing as being pantheistic. While discussing Coppe's 1649 pamphlet of *Some Sweet Sipts, of Some Spiritual Wine*, Smith says that the pamphlet is "fiercely critical of formalized religion as the two prefaces, and excitedly Antinomian, but also stressing the sublimity of God in man and in nature," and that this pamphlet is "Coppe's first deeply pantheistic statement" ("Introduction," *A Collection of Ranter Writings from the 17th Century*, 12). See also J. C. Davis, *Fear, Myth and History : The Ranters and the Historians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 24-25. Davis argues that the Ranters as a radical religious group did not exist, and points out that the historians such as Christopher Hill, A.L. Morton, Frank McGregor had wrongfully identified the individuals they called the Ranters (e.g. Coppe, Clarkson, and Bauthumley) as sharing the common characteristics of antinomianism and pantheism. The second round of discussion among historians in regard to the actual existence of Ranters after the publication of Davis' *Fear, Myth, and History* can be found in the journal *Past and Present* of 1993. See J. F. McGregor, et al, "Fear, Myth and Furore: Reappraising The 'Ranters'," *Past and Present*, 140 (1993): 155-94. J. C. Davis, "Fear, Myth and Furore: Reappraising The 'Ranters': Reply," *Past and Present*, 140 (1993): 194-210.

unrighteous judgment. [. . .] For these things sake (now) I am arisen,
said the Lord.³⁶

The imperative voice highlights a catastrophic event that will soon fall upon the sinners if they remain unmoved and inactive despite warnings from God. In this way, by locating himself and his readers right before the final day of judgment, Coppe is more easily able to endow his narrative with significance beyond the realm of personal experience.

Coppe's iconoclastic performance continues in the building of his authorship. Defying the conventional ways of establishing the authorship through an alliance with patrons or social superiors, Coppe asserts that his writing is empowered by no other than God, the divine within. Although *A Fiery Flying Roll* is written by the hands of Coppe, he insists that the real author of the work is "God the Judge of all." The title page says that "the last warning piece" is written by "his Most Excellent Majesty, dwelling in, and shining through Auxilium Patris [Help of the Father]" rather than by Coppe, a mere husk of his former self. The inspiration of God is not simply figurative, one should note. God's spirit literally enters his body, transforming him into a radically different being:

I was utterly plagued, consumed, damned, rammed, and sunke into
nothing, into the bowels of the still Eternity (my mothers wombe) out of
which I came naked, and whetherto I returned again naked. [. . .] Upon
this [the appearance of spiritual light] the life was taken out of the body

³⁶ Abiezer Coppe, *A Collection of Ranter Writings from the 17th Century*, ed. Nigel Smith (London: Junction, 1983), 95.

(for a season) and it was thus resembled, as if a man with a great brush dipt in whiting, should with one stroke wipe out, or sweep off a picture upon a wall, &c. after a while, breath and life was returned into the form againe.³⁷

His challenge to external authority here is supplemented with his experimental writing style. The surreal experience that he had in the moment of spiritual conversion is an inner experience that cannot be shared with his readers without an extreme stretch of imagination and the symbolic violence to the conventional use of language. The images of rebirth such as “wombe” and the naked body are mobilized not simply to embellish his writing but to affirm the supernatural power of God manifested through his conversion. Just as the divine light –at least in the eye of Coppe- is not a figure but a true image of God, his nakedness and death before the moment of spiritual rebirth are emphasized as true experience and the images depicting this conversion experience become more than figural representations.

Coppe’s representation of his reformed body in the passage also subtly challenges the usual recognition given to the aristocratic ruling body. The passage emphasizes that in order to be a receptacle of the divine spirit, the body as a marker of wealth and status should be destroyed and returned to the state of nature. The emptiness and the blankness are the very conditions to be filled with the spiritual power. Like the white walls of the Reformed church that “sweep off a picture,” or like the bare and

³⁷ Abiezer Coppe, 82.

simple stage characteristic of post-Reformation theaters, the body of the divine subject should be purified of external trappings and superficiality. The naked body divested of social markers in this way declares its victory over the aristocratic bodies richly decked with costumes and jewels as we witnessed in court masques.

Coppe continues to argue on another page that his reformed self is “a sign and wonder” of God, a proof of how “BASE things [from a viewpoint of the majority] have confounded base things [from a viewpoint of God]” (85). The wonder and miracle exhibited through his transformation becomes his victory but at the same time the victory of God. By fashioning himself into a being inseparable from God, Coppe is able to present his spiritual journey as part of the cosmic drama of God’s plan and to alchemize the narrated events into a coherent whole whose future resolution is in the hands of God.

C. Conclusion

In the last two final sections, I’ve attempted to explore how the iconoclastic movement during the English civil wars exploited dramatic language and tropes. Iconoclasm and its discourse during this time period did not simply encompass destruction of images and objects but also the radical criticism of established authority and traditions. Royal images as well as church rituals and ceremonies become the target of iconoclasm once they are viewed in the eyes of iconoclasts as ungodly forces that blind people to the rightful worship of God. In order to produce desired action among the spectators and the readers, the iconoclasts deliberately create a sense of urgency and

crisis. In this polemical process, disparate events were often integrated into a dramatic plot so that the audience might understand clearly the design of God through history. Of course, what the design of God was remained matter of contention among radical Reformers. But despite various conclusions and arguments, radical Reformers did not hesitate to use dramatic language and images in order to let the audience internally experience the epic struggles between the godly and the ungodly.

CHAPTER IV

MILTONIC PROBLEMS IN THE AGE OF THE RESTORATION

A. Milton and the Restoration

As we have seen in the previous chapters, the dynamic tension between image and word entered into a new stage during the civil wars. Under the messianic atmosphere and the imagined popish plot, politically disenfranchised groups used iconoclasm to promulgate their radical worldview in which established traditions and worldly powers became mere forms of human invention. In opposition to these worldly forms (“the husks of things”), radical groups presented themselves as godly power, the protagonists of the divine drama in which the final victory is anticipated and achieved through the presence of the (divine) word. By adopting a divine voice, their speech in print became performative and poetic instead of being informational or expository.¹ By witnessing this speech act, the readers in turn were expected to imaginatively position themselves in a cosmic battle between the divine and the satanic and to experience the fear and wonder of God’s plan.

In this last chapter, I will turn our attention to Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. Studying Milton’s epic will allow us to understand how the unparalleled experiment of theatricality rooted in printed media and godly inspiration continued to play an important role in the Restoration period. Until the recent attempts by Milton scholars to consider his epic as being in a dialogic opposition to the official Restoration culture, Milton’s

¹ Thomas F Merrill, *Epic God-Talk: Paradise Lost and the Grammar of Religious Language* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1986), 64-75.

Paradise Lost had been traditionally interpreted to be incongruent with the Restoration spirit.² Dubbed widely as the age of John Dryden by previous generations of literary historians, Restoration literature has been believed to reflect and constitute a radical break from the troubling past of 1640s and 1650s. Libertine court culture, represented by the Earl of Rochester's infamous sexual innuendos and bawdy language, was the strong evidence to prove the indifference of the age to moral and religious concerns (Benedict chapter 2). The popularity of the rake character in Restoration comedies and their primary focus on domestic issues such as sexuality and marriage also appeared to indicate how far Milton was behind the fashion and social trends of the time. Even for those who did not give much significance to the libertine culture, Restoration culture and literature appeared to be much closer to modern than early modern sentiments. As the influential classroom teaching text *The Norton Anthology* (2006 edition) has taught thousands of undergraduate readers, the Restoration is often annexed as part of the long eighteenth century, which "attained political stability and unprecedented commercial vigor."³ In such treatments, it was the age of the emerging middle classes and commercialism, whose new cultural mode, according to the editors, could be garnered in

² Sharon Achinstein would be the most notable scholar approaching Milton's poems in the context of Restoration sociopolitical milieu. In *Literature and Dissent in Milton's England* (2003), she argues that "Milton [in the Restoration] . . . was no mere holdover from the Renaissance. Rather, his preoccupations were absolutely in tune with his contemporary Dissenting writers" (3). For other similar approaches toward Milton's poems, see Thomas Corns, *Uncloistered Virtue: English Political Literature, 1640-1660*, 304-306. Ingo Berensmeyer, "The Art of Oblivion," *European Journal of English Studies* 10 (2006):81-96. Barbara Lewalski, *The Life of John Milton: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 442-538.

³ *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 8th ed. 2 vols (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), 2057.

“the theaters . . . coffee houses, concert halls, pleasure garden, lending libraries, picture exhibitions, and shopping districts.”⁴ If Dryden represents the seeds of secularization and modernization by bringing “England a *modern* literature between 1600 and 1700,” Milton’s poems and his writing style were perceived as the old literary forms of the past.⁵ In this evolutionary reading of English literary history, then, it comes as little surprise to find that Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, although published in the Restoration, appears in a separate volume of the anthology, under the section of early seventeenth century poems, even though the introduction of the poem, putatively written by Barbara Lewalski, quietly acknowledges “the poet’s rejection of heroic couplets, the norm for epic and tragedy in the Restoration.”⁶

The impression of a lone figure disconnected from social mainstream of the Restoration is also strengthened in the traditional biographical accounts of Milton. “Disillusioned even before the close of the Protectorate by the failure of the new reformation from which he [Milton] had expected so much,” Hutchinson wrote in *Milton and the English Mind* (1962), Milton in the Restoration “must spend his powers upon a more universal theme” (96). Hutchinson continues to explain, “not unlike that of Wordsworth, his warmest admirer and truest successor among the English poets,” Milton was in “despair of man’s political activities,” and “took comfort in contemplating the native dignity and worth of individual man, his ‘unconquerable mind’” (96). Although depicting the Restoration Milton in a more sophisticated tone, Blare Warden’s 1990

⁴ Ibid. 2057.

⁵ Ibid. 2074

⁶ Ibid. 1833.

study also shares the same conviction with Hutchison about Milton's lack of interest in politics after the Restoration and argues in a similar way that *Paradise Lost* is a product of Milton's turn-around from political to aesthetic and religious concerns. Warden first emphasizes the discontinuity in Milton's writing practices before and after the Restoration by saying that "with the restoration of monarchy Milton returned from the prose he had written 'of the left hand' to his poetic vocation, and completed *Paradise Lost*."⁷ Warden goes further and argues that with the arrival of the Restoration, Milton came to painfully recognize "the measureless difference of proportion between temporal politics and eternal verities" and that this painful recognition led him to "withdraw from politics into faith."⁸ Seen in this way, Milton's *Paradise Lost* becomes a literary work that marks Milton's disengagement from political and cultural issues of the time.

Even those who find in Milton's Restoration poems the persistence of his adherence to republicanism and political reforms, they typically espouse the problematic view of Milton as a solitary figure, who alone --or with very little help-- fought against his outnumbering enemies. Samuel Coleridge's romantic description of Milton's life in *Biographia Literaria* (1817) is one of the earliest examples looking at *Paradise Lost* as an extraordinary literary achievement by a "solitary individual" who refused to succumb to the pressure from others. Characterizing the Restoration Milton as "poor, sick, old, blind, slandered, persecuted," Coleridge argues that Milton was "as little understood by

⁷ Blair Worden, "Milton's Republicanism and the Tyranny of Heaven," *Machiavelli and Republicanism*, eds. Gisela Bock, et al. (Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 235.

⁸ Ibid. 244.

the party, for whom, as by that against whom, he had contended.”⁹ Only through “prophetic faith,” and “keen love of his country,” Milton was able to remain true to himself and his political and literary ideals.¹⁰ This romanticized Milton continues to be popular today. Nearly two hundred years later, Katherine Fletcher in one of the websites devoted to Milton and his literary works continues to characterize Milton in the Restoration “as a lone but stalwart adherent to a greater truth rebelling against a false authority,” while comparing his braveness to that of “the character Abdiel as portrayed in Book V of *Paradise Lost*.”¹¹

This popular view of Milton, although dramatic and entertaining, is problematical because it fails to give justice to the role of dissent culture in which Milton actively participated and relied upon. The cultural activities of the dissenters in the Restoration, which have been often underestimated in the traditional historiography of the period, constituted a significant segment of the Restoration culture. Although their number might not be high in the overall population and their religious beliefs and practices were different from one another, the dissenters exerted their influence as a political opposition group by resisting the enforcement of uniformity of worship throughout the period.¹² The forms of their resistance, of course, were varying by an

⁹ Samuel Coleridge, "Supposed Irritability of Men of Genius Brought to the Test of Facts," *Biographia Literaria: Or, Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*, Eds. Henry Nelson Coleridge and Sara Coleridge Coleridge, Vol. 1.(New York: Holt & Williams, 1872), 169; 168.

¹⁰ Ibid. 169.

¹¹ Katharine Fletcher, "A Biography of John Milton, 1608-1674," *Darkness Visible*. <http://www.christs.cam.ac.uk/darknessvisible/miltons_life.html>.

¹² According to Gary Dekrey, the traditional, underestimation of the population of the

individual as well as by the congregation he or she belonged to. Nevertheless, they were the visible marker of religious and ideological division, the very source of political instability that had once erupted in a civil war. Especially when we consider that the political and social foundation of the early Restoration was not so strong as it appeared to be, it becomes clear that their oppositional power deserves more attention from early modern literary historians as one of the crucial factors that shaped the political and social development of the Restoration. Contrary to the general understanding of Restoration history, the Restoration was not free even in its beginning from the religious and civic conflicts that caused the English civil war. The ways in which the Stuart monarch was restored tells us much about the instability of the Restoration settlements. In the midst of an extremely volatile political situation initiated by the death of Cromwell, nobody including Charles II had absolute control of the political process resulting in the restoration of Stuart monarchy. When Charles in exile expressed his willingness to work with non-Royalist groups in the declaration of Breda, the parliament's and the public's acceptance of the offer was still in the hands of fortune or what may be called God's will. As Keeble points out, "no one who had lived through the unprecedented turmoil of the previous twenty years, and particularly through the bewildering eighteen months since Cromwell's death, had any reason to be confident" that Charles II's return would be

dissenters is "[o]ne of the stumbling blocks to understanding the full importance of Protestant divisions in the politics of the Restoration" ("Between Revolutions" 749). For his challenges to this assumption, read Gary DeKrey, "Between Revolutions: Re-Appraising the Restoration in Britain," *History Compass* 6.3 (2008): 749-50.

"more durable than the succession of constitutional contrivances which had succeeded each other with increasing rapidity, accelerating in 1659 to intervals of a few weeks."¹³

When Charles II crossed the Dover Channel in 1660 to take the throne, he and his royalists were well aware of the dangers ahead of them. To justify their resumption of the throne, they tried numerous tactics that would effectively control the sources of social and political unrest. Interesting among them was a resort to the politics of theatricality. King Charles and his regime actively supported the traditional forms of drama and theatrical events that were conceptually associated with the court culture, while at the same time they systematically endeavored to suppress a counter mode of theatricality that was mediated through the cheap print and sustained by the dissenters. The determination of the state to suppress the seditious and heretical books could be shown in the trial of the printer John Twyn in 1664. Shortly after Charles II returned to the throne, parliament passed the Licensing Act in 1662, which aimed at "preventing the frequent Abuses in printing seditious, treasonable, and unlicensed Books and Pamphlets, and for regulating of Printing and printing press."¹⁴ Modeled on "the Star Chamber ordinance of 1637" the act "re-established a system of compulsory pre-publication licensing," allowing the then Surveyor of the Imprimerie, Sir Roger L'Estrange, to enter and search "premises merely suspected of containing seditious books."¹⁵ L'Estrange,

¹³ N. H. Keeble, *The Restoration: England in the 1660s* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 2.

¹⁴ James Sutherland, *The Restoration Newspaper and Its Development* (Cambridge [UK]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 2.

¹⁵ Harold Love, "L'Estrange, Sir Roger (1616–1704)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Oct 2007),

who had been industriously monitoring suspicious activities of the printers, ransacked Twyn's premise one day and arrested him after finding the printed sheets of *A Treatise of the Execution of Justice*. The book justified the King Charles' execution and asserted the godly duty to rise against the restored monarch (Auchter 342; Sutherland 2), and the trial judge, Sir Robert Hyde, condemned Twyn to death for "most grievous and highest treason":

There's nothing that pretends to Religion, that will avow or justify the killing at Kings, but the Jesuit on the one side, and the Sectary on the other; indeed it is a desperate and dangerous Doctrine, fomented by divers of your Temper, and it's high time some be made Examples for it.¹⁶

In an attempt to set a dreadful example for what will happen to those breaking the Licensing Act, Hyde ordered Twyn "hanged by the neck," and, while being alive, with his "privy members [...] cut'off" and his "entrails [...]taken out" and his body "divided into four Quarters" and his head "cut off."¹⁷ After execution at Tyburn on 24 February, Twyn's "head was displayed over Ludgate and his quarters over other city gate."¹⁸

If Twyn's tragic case magnifies the determination of the new regime to silence oppositional media, the flood of festive, theatrical events especially in the early

<<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16514>>.

¹⁶ Thomas Bayly Howell, et al, *Cobbett's Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings for High Treason and Other Crimes and Misdemeanors from the Earliest Period [1163] to the Present Time [1820]* (London: R. Bagshaw, 1809), Vol.6, 536.

¹⁷ Ibid. 536.

¹⁸ Geoff Kemp, 'Twyn, John (bap. 1619, d. 1664)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008), <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/68209>>.

Restoration show the efforts of the restored Stuart monarch to buttress its ruling position through the maximization of theatrical resources available to it. Although the diarists Pepys and Evelyn tended to portray the public events around the year 1660 as spontaneous expressions of populist joy, it would be naïve to imagine that they took place without supports and encouragements from official authorities.¹⁹ As Paula Backscheider points out, King Charles and his favorites were well aware of the importance of winning public minds, and if necessary, they did not hesitate to use public money to sponsor these events. For example, “the towering maypole erected in the Strand the week before the coronation was paid for by the adjacent parishes and raised and secured by the order of Prince James, then Lord High Admiral, who sent seamen with their cables, pulleys, anchors, and other equipment.”²⁰ The decorating and erecting of the maypole carried then a political significance because people were not openly able to enjoy this traditional pastime during the Commonwealth. By participating the traditional pastimes that had been suppressed during the rule of puritan groups, the spectators in the streets were likely to experience a sense of liberation. “Morris dancing

¹⁹ Evelyn and Pepsys wrote in their diaries that the ways from London and Dover were “strewn with flowers” and filled with “infinite the croud of people and the gallantry of the horsemen, citizens, and noblemen of all sorts” (Pepsys 33). “The bells” were ringing and the streets were “hung with Tapissry, fountains running with wines” (Evelyn 5596) and “The Major, Aldermen, all the Companies in their liver<ie>s, Chaines of Gold, banners; Lords & nobles, Cloth of Silver, gold and vellvet every body clad in, the windos and balconies all set with Ladys, Trumpets, Musick” (Evelyn 5596). For more details, see John Evelyn, “From Evelyn’s Diary,” *A Library of the World's Best Literature: Vol XIV: Empedocles -Florian_* (New York: Cosimo Classics 2008), 5594-5597. Samuel Pepys, *Diary of Samuel Pepys*, eds. J. Smith and G. Gregory Smith (London: Macmillan, 1905).

²⁰ Paula Backscheider, *Spectacular Politics: Theatrical Power and Mass Culture in Early Modern England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1993), 10.

not seen of twenty years before” was openly performed, a Maypole was built for the celebration in the Strand, and in numerous quarters of England bonfires were raised and people, just like they did in “the good old days.”²¹

It should be also noted that the public executions of regicides around this time often involved bonfires. About the time when Charles entered London on his 30th birthday, “effigies of Cromwell, his wife, and the arms of the Commonwealth were burned in huge bonfires in Westminster,”²² and Milton’s “books [also] did burn in bonfires throughout the summer and into the fall of 1660.”²³ Royalist sympathizers were likely to experience these public spectacles as memorable moments of national joy, whereas those opposing the restoration of the monarchy like Milton perceived them otherwise.

In one sense, the tragic note of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* can be an involuntary expression of despair and frustration that Milton had experienced as a dissenter.²⁴ But at the same time, I argue that *Paradise Lost* is a willful affirmation of defiance and future hope for those who refused to forget the experiences of the revolutionary period and

²¹ Leah Marcus, *The Politics of Mirth: Jonson, Herrick, Milton, Marvell, and the Defense of Old Holiday Pastimes* (Chicago London: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 262.

²² Backscheider 7.

²³ Sharon Achinstein, “Milton’s Spectre in the Restoration: Marvell, Dryden, and Literary Enthusiasm,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 59.1 (1996): 1.

²⁴ In 1662 the Anglican Royalist Parliament passed the act of uniformity, which enforced a strict adherence to the rites and practices in the Book of Common Prayer. As a result, the clergy that refused to accept Anglican rituals and beliefs were ejected from the established church. In tandem with other parliamentary orders enforcing the conformity of Anglican belief such as the Conventual Act of 1664, the Five Mile Act of 1665, this repressive measure created a large population of dissenters, a heterogeneous group that not only included “radical Quakers as well as conservative Presbyterians” and even Catholics (Achinstein 7). Despite heterogeneous composition as a group, the dissenters were in the same boat as individuals who were persecuted by the government because of their refusal of religious conformity. See more about this historical development in Sharon Achinstein, “Reading Dissent,” *Literature and Dissent in Milton’s England*, 1-22.

wanted to continue expanding their godly wisdom in difficult times. Dramatic imagination of *Paradise Lost*, anchored in shared values and social practices, enabled Milton and his “fit” readers to solidify their collective identity against the hegemonic groups who sought to silence – and even to demonize- their Puritan conviction and conscience. To understand how dramatic imagination works in this way, I will first discuss Milton’s Reforming interests in drama and theatricality. His radical prose during the English civil war, I will suggest, provides insight into the nature of his dramatic imagination, which culminated in the publishing of *Paradise Lost*. In this sense, this chapter will suggest that his Restoration poetry is deeply informed by, rather than divorced from, his pre-Restoration experiences as a radical prose writer. In the second half of this chapter, I will turn my attention to Restoration drama and its typical mode of theatricality to give a better sense of the difference in the performance of literary imagination between Milton and his cultural opponents. In this process, Milton’s theatrical imagination will emerge as being in a dialogic relationship with the dominant mode of theatricality that the Stuart court had sponsored and fostered for their political purpose. By focusing on the discourse of the literary forms centering on Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, this chapter will provide alternative reading to understand the politics of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* within the context of the contemporary cultural war between the dissenters and the royalists.

B. Milton's Dramatic Imagination

Although typically classified as an epic, *Paradise Lost* is characterized by distinctive dramatic elements. Instead of letting the epic narrator dominate the poem with an extradiegetic voice, Milton often uses in many scenes dramatic conversations and soliloquies as well as what appears to be “stage directions about the body language, costumes, and gestures of the personae.”²⁵ For example, Satan's soliloquy in Book IV allows us to observe the inner conflicts in his mind from his own perspective. The ways in which Satan's soliloquy is presented to the audience demonstrate the sophistication of Milton's dramatic skills. To begin with, Milton ensures that Satan's emotional outbursts are plausible as a response to the dramatic situation into which he literally has fallen. By having Satan accidentally look up at the sun, a traditional icon of God, his tormenting “remembrance” upon his current downfall is naturally introduced: “O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams/ That bring to my remembrance from what state/ I fell, how glorious once above thy Sphere” (4: 37-39). Milton also helps readers to see the enormity of Satan's sin of rebellion against God by letting Satan admit with his own mouth how easy it was “to afford him [God] praise,” and to “pay him thanks” (4:46-47). The dreadful consequences of Satan's fall are vividly captured in his being powerless to be free from the hell. Regardless of the place he ran away from, Satan finds himself shackled to endless despair and sufferings:

Me miserable! which way shall I flie

²⁵ Timothy Burbery, *Milton the Dramatist* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: Duquesne University Press, 2007), xii.

Infinite wrauth, and infinite despaire?

Which way I flies is Hell; my self am Hell. (4: 73-75)

Echoing the famous line about hell in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* ("Why, this is hell, nor am I [Mephistopheles] out of it." 1.3. 78), Milton here not only displays his familiarity with Renaissance drama but also in a subtle way revises the dramatic representation of Lucifer in Marlowe's play.

As a minor character, Marlowe's Lucifer is stereotypical. Marlow portrays him as an evil being whose supernatural power is manifested through terrifying physical appearance. He does not possess, however, a rhetorical power as seductive as Satan's in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. When Lucifer is on stage to remind Faustus of the allegiance to hell he has promised, he repeatedly urges Faustus, who is now torn apart by guilt, in a mechanical manner "to not think of God. Think of the devil." His verbal skills are underwhelming, not powerful enough to defeat the persuasion of Faustus' conscience. Instead, what proves to be effective in keeping Faustus under his influence is the spectacle of pageantry that Lucifer offers to Faustus. Each of Seven Deadly Sins such as Pride, Covetousness, and Wrath appears before Faustus to provide him with the delight of seeing and interacting with supernatural spirits. They are largely, in other words, presented as almost harmless creatures, not much different from the mischievous puck in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night Dream*. Gluttony's speech, for example, achieves a comic relief through witty personification of everyday food the audience can readily

relate to. As an answer to Faustus' question, "what are thou, the fifth?," Gluttony tells a story about his family in the following way:

I am Gluttony. [. . .] Oh, I come of a royal parentage. My grandfather was a gammon of bacon, my grandmother a hogshed of claret wine. My godfathers were these: Peter Pickle-herring and Martin Martlemas-beef. Oh, but my godmother, she was a jolly gentlewoman, and well beloved in every good town and city; her name was Mistress Margery March-beer. Now, Faustus, thou hast heard all my progeny, wilt thou bid me to supper? (2.3.136-146).

As some critics argue, it is plausible to read the significance of seven deadly sins as an allegory referring to "Faustus' sinfulness," a sort of invitation for the audience to figure out to what extent his behavior and thought can be considered as "gluttony," "avarice (cupidity)," "pride (disobedience)" and others.²⁶ But another way to examine the dramatic scene is to focus on its theatricality, which is important for our theme. The show performed by seven deadly sins is provided for the pleasure of Faustus, who was at the moment wavering in his allegiance to the hell. Throughout the play, dramatic performances are strongly associated with the dark magical power that Faust had gained in exchange for his soul. With his conjuring power, Faust "attains . . . the status of court entertainer who delights the Emperor and his courtiers with enchanting shows."²⁷ As

²⁶ David Bevington, and Eric Rasmussen, "Introduction," *Doctor Faustus a- and B- Texts (1604, 1616) : Christopher Marlowe and His Collaborator and Revisers* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), 19.

²⁷ Huston Diehl, *Staging Reform, Reforming the Stage: Protestantism and Popular Theater*

shown in the famous Helen scene (5.1.90-109), Faust uses his dark power not simply to delight others but also to indulge in carnal desires in order to suppress his guilty conscience. In this sense, the spectacle in Marlowe's tragedy is presented as a morally harmful diversion, a useless past-time that one should steer away from if he or she cares about spiritual matters.

Marlowe's negative view of theatricality is not much different from those of antitheatrical pamphleteers during his time. Both Marlowe and the pamphleteers share their anxiety about eye-catching, lavishing performances that can make the spectators addicted to visual or sensual images, which make them misspend their precious time on spiritually useless things. On the other hand, Milton's view of theatricality as exemplified in his *Paradise Lost* is not so straightforward as that of Marlow and his antitheatrical contemporaries. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton apparently signals the danger of theatricality by allowing Satan more than any other character in the poem to be most skillful in dramatic performance. But Milton complicates the notion of theatricality and the ways in which to cope with its potential problems posed against spiritual progress.

In Book XI, the angel Michael comes down to Paradise to give needed lessons to Adam and Eve before they are expelled from their abode. What is interesting about Michael's teaching is the ways in which his lessons are delivered to Adam. Unlike Raphael's earlier teaching conducted in a sociable and friendly manner, Michael's teaching, which occurs as a consequence of original sin, carries itself in a more

patriarchal manner. Adam is degraded to a student, who has to learn how to tell the good from the evil in the future events of history. After ascending to the top of the hill in Paradise, Michael shows Adam “the visions of God,” the visual images of human history which requires moral judgment for the correct understanding of its meaning. Adam many times misjudges the visions, one of them being a scene in which “a beavie of fair women, richly gay/ In Gems and wanton dress; to the Harp they sung/Soft amorous Ditties, and in dance came on” (11:581-83). Adam, who was previously disturbed by the gruesome sights of murder and disease that will befall his offspring, is inclined to the pleasing sight and declares his liking by saying, “Much better seems this Vision, and more hope/ Of peaceful days portends”(11:599-600). In order to correct his false judgment, Michael must explain the danger of deceptive appearance. He reprimands Adam and advises him, “Judg not what is best/ By pleasure, though to Nature seeming meet” (11:603-604). The “fair female Troop” Adam has just seen, he continues to explain, “Bred onely and completed to the taste/ Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance/ To dress, and trouble the Tongue, and roule the eye,” although they seemed “of Goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay” (11:614-20).

The visual images presented by Michael in this way are strictly subordinated to the educational purpose so that Adam may “learn to recognize the temptation of delight and temper it with moral judgment.”²⁸ If the procession of the Seven Deadly Sins in Marlow’s play was a diversion that helped Faust to forget his conscience, the counterpart

²⁸ Ann Coiro, “ ‘To Repair the Ruins of Our First Parents’: Of Education and Fallen Adam,” *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 28.1 (1988): 138.

presented to Adam, in contrast, serves as a moral reminder for Adam about his propensity for misjudgment. Milton's exploitation of theatrical illusion, however, is not confined only to the discussion between Michael and Adam. In one sense, the epic as a whole can be considered a series of dramatic scenes in which readers like Adam are asked to participate but at the same time to be critical of their own responses. In other words, as Stanley Fish acutely observes, "Michael's strategy in Book XI is Milton's strategy in the entire poem, whereby his reader becomes his pupil, taught according to his present capacities in the hope that he can be educated, in tract of time, to enlarge them."²⁹

Milton's poem thus fosters a reading experience much more dynamic than usual. Confusions, seductions, and deceptions are not demarcated from the outset to attack their moral danger as is often the case in a didactic treatise. Instead, the force of deceptive illusion is fully activated to test the moral integrity of readers under extreme conditions. Milton does not use this tactic simply to harass readers with no reason. His contemporary readers, in Milton's view, should have opportunities that will allow them to exercise their own knowledge and conscience so that they might be better prepared when they had to combat evil in their daily lives. When his opponents in 1642 used the growing number of schisms and sects as an excuse for not reforming the church, Milton argued the following in *The Reason of Church- Government* (1642):

²⁹ Stanley Fish, *Surprised by Sin: The Reader In "Paradise Lost,"* (London, Melbourne, New York: Macmillan; St. Martin's, 1967), 22.

If God comes to trie our constancy we ought not to shrink, or stand the lesse firmly for that, but passe on with more stedfast resolution to establish the truth though it were through a lane of sects and heresies on each side. Other things men do to the glory of God: but sects and errors it seems God suffers to be for the glory of good men; that the world may know and reference their true fortitude and undaunted constancy in the truth.³⁰

Instead of treating “the sects and schisms” as something harmful that should be avoided, Milton suggests that they are inevitable “throws and pangs” before “the birth of reformation.” “[T]he fierce encounter of truth and falsehood,” according to Milton, is a necessary trial in which we can show “our constancy” and enlarge “our knowledge.” In June 1643 when the long parliament passed legislation that required all books and pamphlets to be licensed, it was the same language that Milton used in *Areopagitica* (1644) to oppose the reinstatement of censorship and to defend the free exchange of ideas in public arena:

I cannot praise a fugitive and cloister'd vertue, unexercis'd a& unbreath'd,
that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race,
where that immortall garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat.
Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world; we bring impurity

³⁰ John Milton, "Reason of Church-Government," *The Riverside Milton*, ed. Roy Flannagan (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), 918.

much rather; that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by that which is contrary.³¹

Milton observes that seeking absolute purity in the postlapsarian world is neither desirable nor practically possible. Virtue does not reside in a private, well protected place; instead, it flourishes only through contention with its adversaries to the fullest measure possible. Milton's militant notion of truth as shown in these tracts goes far beyond the traditional, static view of truth, which ideologically tends to disapprove significant social changes with the threat of disorder or chaos. In the 1640s, when Milton wrote these pamphlets in the midst of unforeseen political and social changes, his radical view of truth had a clear political intent. By suggesting that truth is not a ready-made, but a process full of drama that eventually ends in the glory of God, Milton found a way to accommodate social and political changes within the premise of godly reforms.

Milton's interest in drama might be personal and but in the contexts we've examined it is also important to note that his steady interest in drama was a part of his reformation zeal. In *Reason of Church- Government*, which I have just quoted for his notion of truth, he discusses the significance of drama in the following way:

Or whether those Dramatic constitutions, wherein *Sophocles* and *Euripides* raigne shall be found more doctrinal and exemplary to a Nation, the Scripture also affords us a divine pastoral Drama in the Song of *Salomon* consisting of two persons and a double Chorus, as *Origen*

³¹ John Milton, "Areopagitica," *The Riverside Milton*, ed. Roy Flannagan (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), 1006.

rightly judges. And the Apocalyps of Saint John is the majestick image of
 a high and stately Tragedy, shutting up and intermingling her solemn
 Scenes and Acts with a sevenfold *Chorus* of halleluja's and harping
 symphonies.³²

Milton's favorable opinion of drama is all the more striking, given that the tract was published in the same year (1642) when the Long Parliament ordered public theaters closed. The passage serves as another example that can challenge the use of the 1642 Parliament Order as evidence of puritan prejudice against staged performances. Milton as a Puritan does not reveal any qualms mentioning Greek tragedy as a possible working model for natural literature for the reformed country. Furthermore, Milton challenges the traditional distinctions between secular drama and scriptural works by redefining the latter in terms of dramatic genre. He argues that the reformed drama as he envisions it "will inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue, and publick civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune, to celebrate in glorious and lofty Hymns the throne and equipage of Gods Almightynesse."³³ The delight that drama offers to the audience is effective in educating people "because the spirit of man cannot demean itselfe lively in this body without some recreating intermission of labour."³⁴ Like "sweet pils to be swallow'd down," Milton suggests that

³² Milton, "Reason of Church-Government," 923.

³³ Ibid. 923.

³⁴ Ibid. 924.

the reformed recreation will encourage people to “make the taste of vertuous documents harsh and sowr.” (924).³⁵

Reason of Church-Government is not the only source that reveals Milton’s reforming interest in drama. In his earlier years, Milton made his comments about the books he read in his commonplace book. One of the entries was about the Church father Tertullian, who in *De Spectaculis* condemned “public shows” and argued they should be closed to “Christians.”³⁶ As a response to this antitheatrical view, Milton wrote,

[A]lthough the corruptions in the theater deservedly should be removed, it is by no means necessary for that reason that all practice of the dramatic arts should be completely done away with; on the contrary it would rather be absurd beyond measure. For what in all philosophy is more important or more sacred or more exalted than a tragedy rightly produced, what more useful for seeing at a single view the events and changes of human life? ³⁷

The passage shows Milton’s ambivalent attitude toward theatricality. With the qualifying epithets of “rightly produced,” Milton suggests that not every drama is worthy of praise. He admits that there are some “corruptions in the theater” and that they deserved to be removed. But Milton believes that the violent suppression of all dramatic activities yields more harm than good to the reformation cause. Instead, Milton suggests that it is

³⁵ Ibid. 924.

³⁶ John Milton, “Commonplace Book (1630?-1665?),” *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, eds. Don M. Wolfe et al. Vol. 1 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), 489.

³⁷ Ibid. 490-91.

much more effective for a godly purpose to fully utilize the great potential that drama, especially tragedy, has as a vehicle of man's loftiest inspirations.

Milton's utilization of dramatic elements for political and religious reforms can be found in his numerous writings. As one example, we can examine Milton's *Eikonoklastes* (1649), a polemic tract Milton wrote at the request of the Council of the State to defend the execution of King Charles. As the title ("image breaker") indicates, *Eikonoklastes* is consciously challenging the royal image constructed through *Eikon Basilike*, the royalist propaganda tract published ten days after King Charles' execution.³⁸ *Eikon Basilike*, which means "the royal portrait" in Greek, carefully depicts the late Charles as a Christ figure dying for the sins of others. Written in a plain style, the book foregrounds King Charles as a champion of Christian faith and conscience, whose true image is obscured by the "number and show" of "malicious persons."³⁹ Their "foul and false aspersions," Charles says, "were secret engines at first employed against My people's love of me." Charles regrets that his people were "blinded with such mists

³⁸ It should be noted that there has been a controversy about the authorship of *Eikon Basilike*. Madan traces the extent to which John Gauden, later a bishop of Worcester, was involved in the writing of the book, as a sympathizer of the royalist cause. Although Gauden played a significant role in the final shape of the book, Madan also emphasizes that a great portion of its contents was based upon the manuscript that Charles wrote, which Charles intended to publish, when the right time came, in order to vindicate his political decisions during the 1640s. Because of this complicated history in the process of composition, Madan suggests a double authorship of the book. For more details, see Francis Falconer Madan, *A New Bibliography of the Eikon Basilike of King Charles the First* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1950), 126-63.

³⁹ *Eikon Basilike: The Portraiture of His Sacred Majesty in His Solitudes and Sufferings : With Selections from Eikonoklastes*, eds. Jim Daems and Holy Faith Nelson (Peterborough, Ont: Broadview Ed., 2006), 123.

of suspicions,” and wishes before he goes to heaven that this book help “My subjects” have “yet a clearer sight into my most retired thoughts.”⁴⁰

The rhetorical strategy used for establishing the royal image in *Eikon Basilike* is very appealing to general readers because the book “radically departs from traditional political decorum.”⁴¹ Instead of following “parliamentary and ceremonial discourse,” the book consciously adopts “the popular genres of religion and sensibility” and manages to distance Charles from the image of a typical king enjoying the luxury of court life.⁴² The tract’s portrayal of King Charles as holy and humble, inwardly seeking his spiritual peace, is a very appealing portrait of the king, and Milton has to attack its artificiality to defend the Parliament’s action against the late king. In order to debunk the apparently devout image, Milton embraces rather than refuses dramatic metaphor and style. Milton describes Charles’ “misleading” representation of himself in terms of a false drama. *Eikon Basilike*, Milton claims in the Preface, is nothing better than “a Masking scene, and sett there to catch fools and silly gazers.” It contains “little els but the common grounds of tyranny and popery, drest up, the better to deceive, in a new Protestant guise, and trimly garnish’d over.” To unmask the deceitful acts of Charles, Milton aligns the king with a host of tyrants in history who show the excellent skills at “counterfeit[ing] Religious” and further associates him with *Richard III* in Shakespeare:

⁴⁰ Ibid. 122; 160.

⁴¹ Elizabeth Wheeler, “*Eikon Basilike* and the Rhetoric of Self-Representation,” *The Royal Image : Representations of Charles I*, ed. Thomas N. Corns (Cambridge, U.K.; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 137.

⁴² Ibid. 137.

I shall not instance an abstruse Author, where the King might be less conversant, but one whom wee well know was the Closet Companion of these his solitude, William Shakespare; who introduces the Person of Richard the third, speaking in as high a strain of pietie, and mortification, as is uttered in any passage of this Book; and sometimes to the same sense and purpose with some words in his place, I intended, saith he, not only to oblige my Friends and but mine enemies. The Like saith Richard, Act 2, Scen. 1,

I do not know that Englishman
 With whom my soule is any jott at odds,
 More then the Infant that is born to night;
 I thank my God for my humilitie.⁴³

As Nigel Smith argues, the passage might indicate Milton's "contempt for Charles I's own love of Shakespeare."⁴⁴ But this censure should not be taken rashly as the expression of Milton's hostility toward Shakespeare or contemporary commercial drama. We ought to remember that Shakespeare was one writer toward whom the young Milton openly showed his admiration with a commemorate poem, "An Epitaph on the admirable Dramaticke Poet, W. Shakespeare," published in Shakespeare's second folio (1632). If there is a type of theatricality that Milton opposes here, it is a theatricality that is

⁴³ John Milton, "Eikonoklastes," *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, eds. Don M. Wolfe, et al. Vol. 3 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), 361.

⁴⁴ Nigel Smith, *Literature and Revolution in England, 1640-1660* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 16.

demonic, exemplified in the performance of Charles. Charles in the eyes of Milton is a royal actor, not much different from “the Byzantine Emperor” who, “though a most cruel Tyrant . . . by continual study so incorporated the phrase & stile of” Saint Paul’s Epistle that his performance becomes almost indistinguishable from “the Original.”⁴⁵ Like Satan in *Paradise Lost*, Milton suggests, Charles was not fully conscious of the fact that he was acting because pretensions and styles were deeply ingrained in his soul. In this sense, when he quotes the passage from Richard III, Milton only halfway succeeded in making his point about the ungodly nature of Charles’ everyday performance. Certainly, Shakespeare’s *Richard III* helps his readers immediately to recognize the manipulative motives behind Charles’ seemingly friendly gestures, but at the same time, it obscures Milton’s critical stance on Charles’ habitual and almost unconscious exercises of self-promoting performance, because Richard III, like villain-heroes in a typical Renaissance drama, is very conscious of what he is doing.

If Milton’s Satan had already been invented and his readers had been familiar with that kind of demonic theatricality, Milton might be in a better position to offer a dramatic example that would fully support his rhetorical flourishes. However, Milton’s analysis and exposé of the king’s dramatic (self-)deception may have actually provided the poet the seed of a new dramatic representation of evil, which famously came to life in his mock heroic Satan. What is remarkable about Milton’s Satan is not the sheer energy and overreaching ambition Milton ascribed to this antagonist. Marlowe’s

⁴⁵ Milton, “Eikonoklastes,” 361.

Faustus, Shakespeare's Macbeth or Iago can rival Satan in this aspect. Satan is incomparable to other villain-heroes in Renaissance drama not because of his sheer energy and ambition but because of his self-aggrandizing impulses of acting larger than he actually is. Even though cast down to Hell after his defeat in a heavenly war, for example, Satan believes that he will be the same regardless of the changed conditions he is in:

Farewel happy Fields
 Where Joy forever dwells: Haill horrors, hail
 Infernal world, and thou proufoudest Hell
 Receive thy new Possessor: One who bring
 A mind not to be chang'd by Place or Time.
 The mind is its own place, and in it self
 Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n. (1:249-55)

While sounding uplifting and positive, the passage reveals Satan's inclination to elevate himself and exaggerate his ability to rebel against God. He represents himself as a stoic hero, whose inner calm is impervious to external threats. Although in reality he was forced to leave "happy fields," he depicts his removal as a decision of his own will by saying that he bid a "farewl" to happy fields. Satan also glorifies his descent to Hell in a similar manipulation of words. Calling himself "thy new Possessor," he suggests that he came to the Hell in order to govern, not as a result of God's punishment. The forceful dismissal of any negative aspects of his fall from heaven he continues to maintain even

at the end of the passage, where he argues for the independence of his (heroic) mind from surrounding conditions.

Milton provides throughout the poem many examples of Satan's unconscious impulse to glorify himself. I will not dwell at length on these examples since many critics, notably Stanley Fish, have already fully discussed them. The important point, though, is that Milton deliberately presents Satan's theatrical acts as something visually appealing at least to the uncritical eyes of the readers. For example, when Milton illustrates Satan's disfigured body after being expelled from heaven, Milton carefully provides the double perspective of this alteration simultaneously from a fallen (Satanic) viewpoint and from a corrected viewpoint. The famous passage, which Stanley Fish cites in his *Surprised by Sin*, is a case in point. We readers are told in book I about his armaments. The poet informs us that Satan carries "on his shoulders" "his ponderous shield/ Ethereal temper, massy, large and round" (1: 284-85). The shield shaped like

the Moon, whose Orb

Through Optic Glass the Tuscan Artist views

At Ev'ning from the top of Fesole,

Or in Valdarno, to descry new Lands,

Rivers or Mountains in her spotty Globe.

His Spear, to equal which the tallest Pine

Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the Mast

Of some great Ammiral, were but a wand. (1:287-94)

At a casual glance, Satan's weapons appear to be massive and mighty, their sizes comparable to such sublime objects as "moon" and "the tallest Pine/ Hewn on Norwegian hills." But with a closer reading, their grandeur turns out to be the fault of our hasty reading. The celestial object "Moon" in the quote dwindles to be an obscure object, whose existence is so unreal that it becomes barely discernible through the "Optic Glass" that Galileo ("the Tuscan Artist") had used.⁴⁶ In a similar way, Satan's Spear, which readers first think to be "equal" to the tallest tree on "Norwegian hills," ends up being diminished as small as "a wand." The reason Milton deliberately complicates the reading process in this way might be to let readers recognize, as Fish argues, their "fallen intellect," their vulnerability to pleasing images and words. To Fish, Milton lets readers discover their initial attraction to false images and words, so that (puritan) readers might learn from experience "the doctrine of original sin which places a permanent screen (dark glass) between the mind and the full and clear comprehension of what it is."⁴⁷

But when we read *Paradise Lost* as a stern reminder of man's sinful nature in the postlapsarian world, the interpretation can skew the political and cultural underpinnings of Milton's literary works. Although Milton never refutes the doctrine of original sin, his reformation zeal and commitment to social and cultural reforms should be taken into

⁴⁶ For more detailed discussion of Galileo and his optic glass, see Donald, Friedman. "Galileo and the Art of Seeing." *Milton in Italy : Contexts, Images, Contradictions*. Ed. Mario A. Di Cesare. Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1991. 159-74; Flannagan, Roy. "Arts, Artists, Galileo and Concordances." *Milton Quarterly* 1986.23 (1986): 103-05.

⁴⁷ Fish 126.

account when we understand his literary works. Considering the urgent political and cultural issues Milton and his contemporary readers had been struggling with, Milton's problematization of Satanic imposture appears to be more than a moralistic reminder of the epistemological and ontological limits that Christians ought to recognize as a condition of their being sinners. Milton's contemporary puritan readers had to wage fierce battles against their opponents not simply in the field of Christian doctrine but also in military, political, and social arenas, as we have already examined in previous chapters. Especially during the Restoration, the majority of puritans became dissenters and had to weather "sustained and determined persecution" by the restored Stuart monarchy.⁴⁸ As I shall soon discuss at length, one of the purposes for which Milton wrote his biblical epic was to inspire and support the Dissenters -- rather than humiliate them for their inability to resist carnal desire-- whose faith and conviction were being threatened by the ecclesiastical or state power.

So far we've examined how dramatic imagination is at work not only in Milton's poetry but also in his pre-Restoration prose. His stance toward theatricality can be said to be basically double-edged. On the one hand, as shown in *Eikon Basilike*, he condemns the deceptive theatrical acts exemplified through Charles and his royalist followers, and he wants the English people to spiritually outgrow a false heroism and its fallen rhetoric and dramaturgy. But at the same time, Milton does not think that drama is an evil in itself. On the contrary, Milton's prose and his *Paradise Lost* show that he fully takes

⁴⁸ N. H. Keeble, "Milton and Puritanism," *A Companion to Milton*, ed. Thomas N. Corns (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 126.

advantage of the dramatic imagination when he engages in a polemic war against his political opponents and against Satanic forces as well. Milton's militant use of dramatic imagination for his reforming agenda, in this respect, is one instance of many in which pamphlet writers during the civil wars (e.g. Richard Overton, John Taylor, and Abiezer Coppe) exploited dramatic language and metaphors for their own polemic purposes. This polemic and experimental spirit that Milton and his contemporary pamphleteers shared has typically not been appreciated, or if appreciated, has been mentioned mostly in the discussion of Milton's prose. Until quite recently, in other words, the dramatic qualities of Milton's *Paradise Lost* have been understood as a fruit of his humanist learning and education or his personal penchant for Renaissance drama despite his being a puritan.⁴⁹

In the first chapter, I've touched upon a Protestant culture of the seventeenth century in which drama was approved for the use of education. By focusing on Milton's interest in drama as a tool for Christian readers to learn biblical history and raise their abilities to withstand satanic temptations, I tried to show that *Paradise Lost* is part of this culture or tradition, even though at the same time I acknowledge that there were few

⁴⁹ For studies of the influence of Renaissance drama upon Milton's *Paradise Lost*, see Timothy J. Burbery, *Milton the Dramatist*, Pittsburgh, Pa.: Duquesne University Press (2007); James Holly Hanford, *John Milton, Poet and Humanist*, Cleveland: Press of Western Reserve University (1966), 224-43; Richard S. Ide, "On the Uses of Elizabethan Drama: The Revaluation of Epic in *Paradise Lost*," *Milton Studies* 17 (1983): 121-40. For an article exploring the influence of Greek drama upon Milton's dramatic works, see Matthew Steggle, "the Tragical Part': Milton's Masque and Euripides," *Classical and Modern Literature: A Quarterly* 20.1 (1999): 18-36. Several recent books and articles discuss the positive links between Milton's vision of reformation and his dramatic works. Among them, David Loewenstein's book, *Milton and the Drama of History: Historical Vision, Iconoclasm, and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990) is the most exhaustive treatment of this subject.

reformers comparable to Milton who had realized the full potential of drama as powerfully as him. Milton's deliberate complication of the reading process, in this respect, has an aim of providing his readers with an everyday spiritual exercise that will eventually enable them to overcome their fallen impulses or desires. As Keeble observes, one of the many aspects that sets Milton's *Paradise Lost* apart from other epics (and plays) is the emphasis on "everyday experience" enacted by Adam and Eve such as "drinking, gardening, and making love."⁵⁰ Although in the eyes of modern readers what Adam and Eve do in Eden appears to be not very inspiring, it should be noted that Puritans of the seventeenth century constantly opposed the traditional "concept of the 'spiritual' or 'religious' life as separate from everyday social life."⁵¹ Readerly experience, for Milton, is one of the daily routines that constitute a Puritan life, and the right performance of reading under the guidance of "charity" is one path, even if not the only path, that allows readers to "possess/ A paradise within thee [themselves], happier farr" (12:584, 585-86).

C. Milton and Restoration Drama

I've so far examined how Milton's dramatic imagination in *Paradise Lost* indicates continuity rather than a break with his commitment to reformation ideas and concerns. But insisting on the continuity of reformation ideas in Milton's revolutionary prose and his Restoration poetry is only a half-truth unless it is complemented with a due recognition of significant social and political changes of the Restoration that are

⁵⁰ Keeble, "Milton and Puritanism," 139.

⁵¹ Ibid. 138.

reflected in Milton's poetry. In this last section, I will begin with outlining the general characteristics of early Restoration drama in order to reveal the political and cultural agenda behind it. Instead of treating Restoration drama as an autonomous cultural field, I will consider its operation as being faithful to the Royalists' 'reformed' strategy of containing revolutionary energies and transforming them into non-threatening forms of popular entertainment. In this process of analysis, I will briefly touch on the theory of diversion, which was gaining popularity among the royalists, and will explain the conceptual link of the theory to the dramatic practices of the commercial theaters. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, I will argue, is not only a reaction to the politics of diversion but also a pursuit of the alternative mode of performance that can support the collective identity of the dissenters and sustain their revolutionary energies (or godly zeal) through difficult times.

Contrary to what the majority of puritan groups wished for, the restored Stuart monarchy in the first decade of its reign chose to ignore the promise of Breda, and the crown instead pursued a series of legal actions known as the Clarendon Code, which was largely intended for the control of those whom they considered to be dangerous sects and factions. Alongside the implementation of coercive measures and use of force, King Charles and his parliament sought more effective ways of controlling public opinion. The Royalists and Anglicans learned a hard lesson from the experience of the civil wars about the importance of public opinion. They not only monitored the clandestine cultural activities among the dissenters by means of censorship and espionage, but also

attempted to turn public attention from divisive religious and political issues to more neutral –or depoliticized- subjects. Drama was one of the important apparatuses that King Charles and his followers relied upon for this goal. As the conventional popular account of early modern history emphasizes, Charles reopened public theaters in 1660 that a puritan regime and its leaders had managed to close down for decades. But it should be noted that Charles was not simply restoring the old institution to the same condition as it had been in before the 1642 parliamentary order. He allowed only two public theaters in London to be operative, and then placed his two royalist favorites, William Davenant and Thomas Killgrew, in the seat of authority for each company. As Nancy Maguire observes, it was not these two managers alone, but a majority of the companies, including actors, “formed a political network closely connected through families, experiences, and financial enterprises.”⁵² In short, the two public theaters during the Restoration, unlike the professional theaters in the Caroline period, established their businesses under the supervision of King Charles and his court.

Not only were the members of the companies closely tied to one another through marriage and patronage, they also shared a similar aesthetic taste, which fueled the vogue for tragicomedies and heroic drama. Both dramatic genres have been often discussed in respect to the Caroline elite culture and contemporary French neo-classicism. The scholars positioning Restoration drama within the Caroline culture emphasize the steady influences of Ben Jonson and Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher

⁵² Nancy Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration: English Tragicomedy 1660-1671* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 10.

upon the development. Identifying Ben Jonson as a dramatist of a previous generation with “the most respected critical thinking,” Corman, for example, emphasizes his continuing role as an arbiter of taste and culture against which Restoration playwrights measured their achievements in drama.⁵³ In a similar manner, critics see the strong presence of Beaumont and Fletcher in the popularity of tragicomedy and its bipartite structure, “an almost schizophrenic split between the platonic, précieuse court drama and the relatively low and realistic comedy of the popular theatre.”⁵⁴ The generic influence of Caroline court masque is also attributed to the development of heroic plays. Maguire argues that “the continuing influence of the court masque” is a prime characteristic of Restoration drama, and suggests, “the Carolean political/playwrights transformed the court masque into the rhymed heroic play.”⁵⁵ For the group of critics who emphasize the influence of French culture in the development of Restoration drama, the years of Charles and his followers' exile at Paris turned out to be fortunate and productive. In the view of Dudley Miles, “the royalists who had followed Queen Henrietta to Saint Germain or who later fled to the Continent [. . .] enjoyed for many years the balls, concerts, promenades, and various fêtes provided for their entertainment at Fontainebleau or in the vicinity of the Louvre,” and upon returning to England, “they returned with a genuine liking for the French manner of living and thinking.”⁵⁶ Miles

⁵³ Brian Corman. “The ‘Mixed Way’ of Comedy,” *Genre and Generic Change in English Comedy 1660-1710* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 15.

⁵⁴ Robert Hume, “Diversity and Development in Restoration Comedy 1660-1679,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 5.3 (1972): 367.

⁵⁵ Nancy Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration*, 10.

⁵⁶ Dudley Miles, *The Influence of Moliere on Restoration Comedy* (New York: Octagon

highlights the elevated status of French fashion and taste, which then became the measure of civilization; not only “hats and periwigs, gloves, mirrors, perfumes, ribbons, and rings were brought from Paris,” but also “carpets, coaches, and clocks had to be imported with the wines from Bordeaux and the cheese from Calais.”⁵⁷

According to these critics, the influence of French culture also finds its way into Restoration plays. The increased debates about dramatic unities based on neo-classicism, dramatists’ interests in picturing contemporary manners without a moralizing sting to correct them, the growing popularity of English adaptations and performances of French drama, and an eagerness to reform language following French models are examples critics see as the manifestations of influence (Miles 35-40; Clark 50-63). The rhymed heroic plays in particular are considered a product of French influence, as Catherine Cole Mambretti explains:

The continuity of English dramatic traditions, even through the Interregnum, cannot be denied. Nonetheless, new plays, and particularly the innovations of heroic drama, seem to have begun to flourish after a catalyst was introduced in the form of French plays, both in translation and as performed by French companies. *Altemera*, the first heroic play written, was itself inspired by Orrery's familiarity with French drama and by Charles II, who loved French literature. The first play performed entirely in heroic couplets, Katherine Philips's *Pompey*, was a translation

Books, 1971), 58.

⁵⁷ Ibid. 59.

from Corneille. And even Dryden, despite his expressed disdain for French plays, may have included heroic couplets in *The Rival Ladies* and *The Indian Queen* (a thoroughly heroic play) as a concession to the growing appreciation of the Restoration audience for the style of serious French drama.⁵⁸

The theoretical models focusing on the influence of Caroline and French culture help us to understand the origins of the conservative and elitist aspects of Restoration drama. But most of these critical accounts tend to assume that Charles, his royalist supporters, and to some degree even the audience were living in an almost self-contained world of comfort and pleasure, suggesting that their preferences for these dramatic genres were just unconscious expressions of their personal taste that had no bearing upon political or strategic calculation. I agree to some extent that the leading elites in the period felt at home with these dramatic genres, because they mirror aristocratic norms and values to which they were accustomed. But what was peculiar about Restoration drama was the fact that the public theaters helped popularize the aristocratic (and continental) culture and made it accessible to the general public. In other words, there was a steady effort or process implemented in the cultural domain of public theaters that encouraged not only courtiers and country gentlemen but also citizens in London to enjoy a variety of lavish drama productions, which had been conceived as the preserve of the aristocratic. This argument might be surprising to those who believe that the

⁵⁸ Catherine Mambretti, "Orinda on the Restoration Stage," *Comparative Literature* 37.3 (1985): 251.

Restoration audience predominantly consisted of “upper-class gallants.”⁵⁹ But as Harold Love’s meticulous study of the Restoration audience convincingly explains, in the composition of the Restoration audience, “there was always a significant middle-class element.”⁶⁰ According to Love, especially the Duke’s theater at the Dorset garden, surrounded by the neighborhoods notorious for crime and poverty (i.e. St Bridge; Bridewell; Whitefriars), could not have been as commercially successful as it was without the significant influx of a citizen audience on a regular basis. It is also noteworthy that the Duke’s company was capable of staging a “machine play” packed with action, dance, music and movable scenery, which must have created a spectacular illusion that would attract wider audience.

The appearance of professional actresses on the Restoration stage can be also explained by the same secularization process of court culture. It is well known that women were not allowed to be on a public stage until the Restoration period began. The only institutionalized public space, before this period, that tolerated women’s stage appearance was the royal court. As Howe observes, “Queen Anne and her ladies took prominent roles in the great Jacobean masques of Jonson and Inigo Jones and such female activity [in court masques] increased after Henrietta Maria married Charles I.”⁶¹ Of course, while Charles II and his royalists “spent much time in exile on the Continent where actresses had long been an accepted feature of theater,” they would have been

⁵⁹ Harold Love, “Who Were the Restoration Audience?” *Yearbook of English Studies* 10 (1980): 22.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 39.

⁶¹ Elizabeth Howe, *The First English Actresses: Women and Drama, 1660-1700* (Cambridge ; New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 21.

more accustomed to the presence of female actors in drama.⁶² Again, what is curious about the origin(s) of female actors in Restoration drama is not the fact that they came from court culture and/or Continental Europe, but the fact that the dramatic practice hitherto exclusively reserved for the aristocratic was popularized in the Restoration, largely by the efforts of royalist dramatists.

The strong suggestion that these changes did not take place accidentally can also be found in a reading of the legal documents of the government. On 21 August 1660, Charles II granted the warrant to Killigrew and Davenant, promising them their exclusive legal rights to erect and maintain their theater companies in London. In this warrant, Charles rationalized his decision by emphasizing the potential moral dangers posed by the current dramatic activities around London. He said he was “informed” that “certain persons in and about our City of London, or the suburbs thereof, do frequently assemble for the performing and acting of plays and interludes for rewards.”⁶³ Condemning these plays as “scandalous and offensive,” Charles made it clear that the potentially disorderly dramatic activities should be controlled through the institutionalization of a theatrical duopoly:

We [King Charles II], . . . yet not holding it necessary totally to suppress the use of theaters, because we are assured that if the evils and scandal in the plays that now are or have been acted were taken away, the same

⁶² Ibid. 23.

⁶³ “Warrant granted by Charles II to Killigrew and Davenant, 21 August 1660,” *Restoration and Georgian England, 1660-1788*, eds. David Thomas and Arnold Hare (Cambridge [England] ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 12.

might serve as innocent and harmless divertissement for many of our subjects: and having experience of the art and skill of our trusty and well-beloved Thomas Killigrew . . . and Sir William Davenant, . . . do hereby give and grant [them]. . . full power and authority to erect two companies of players⁶⁴

The wording of the warrant complicates the image of the restored Stuart court in drama history where Charles II is usually seen as having a different attitude toward drama and art from that of the parliament and puritans in the 1640s. However, Charles II here is not so friendly toward drama as to welcome the growing dramatic activities around London and, instead, justifies the need of state intervention, using a rhetoric similar to that the Long Parliament had used two decades earlier. King Charles' defense of state intervention in the name of moral good might be a purely rhetorical gesture to disguise his favoritism toward the two courtiers in a socially acceptable language. But the warrant at least tells us that there were notable dramatic activities already in place around the time when Charles took his throne. Instead of harnessing this theatrical energy from below, Charles chose to suppress it with the reason of "profanation and scurrility."⁶⁵

The same kind of moralistic rhetoric characteristic of the 1660 warrant that we have just examined continued to be prominent in the patent issued to Killigrew on 25 April 1662, in which Charles reprimanded and reversed the convention of using boys for "women's parts." He characterized the tradition where "the women's parts therein have

⁶⁴ Ibid. 12.

⁶⁵ Ibid. 12.

been acted by men in the habit of women” as an “abuse,” thereby ordering that “all the women’s parts to be acted in either of the said two companies . . . [be] performed by women” (Thomas and Hare 17-18). Mimicking reformist rhetoric, he ended his speech by saying that if plays are “corrected and purged” of “offensive and scandalous” abuses, as he ordered, they “may **by such reformation** be esteemed not only harmless delight, but useful and instructive representations of human life, to such of our good subjects”[emphasis mine].

Charles’ co-opting of reformist rhetoric is especially surprising for modern readers who look at Restoration drama as something that is far from –or even hostile to– reformist concerns. As one critic argues, the “reformist rhetoric” here might be empty words without any significant meaning behind them, a disguise to mask “more pecuniary motives of the theatre managers [i.e. Davenant and Killigrew]” that Charles was personally attached to.⁶⁶ But we scratch our heads, wondering how the employment of actresses would be a sure promise to boost their commercial gains in the eyes of the royalists, who knew that sticking to the old traditional ways would not harm their monetary interests. Perhaps the implementation of these changes might be better explained as a result of the influence of Davenant, who already had experience in staging new ‘reformed’ drama in the Cromwellian period and wanted to continue to pursue his dramatic vision. But even admitting that Davenant was an architect of these new changes, it does not significantly alter the view that there was at least considerable

⁶⁶ Deborah Fisk, "The Restoration Actress," *A Companion to Restoration Drama*, ed. Susan J. Owen (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 73.

consensus among royalists to control theatrical activities for their cultural agenda and to authorize this process in moralistic – even reformist- terms.

The royalists' cultural campaign, manifested through the innovations of theatrical infrastructure, marks a subtle shift in their attitude toward the public. In comparison to other literary genres available during this time, theater was the most collective art form, which involved the heavy negotiations between social groups with potentially conflicting interests in the pursuit of literary experience. Especially given the political instability that the restored Stuart regime was still struggling with, it was no wonder that they were extra-watchful for potential disruptions or threats to their power in a vibrant social space like a public theater, where people more easily mingled and exchanged their diverse views on political and social issues. Through the experience of the civil wars, they also learned that resorting to suppressive measures alone could not change the attitude of the public in a direction favorable to them. In this context, Joshua Scodel 's recent study of the ways in which the term 'diversion' gained currency among the royalists can illuminate the shifting strategy of the early Restoration regime in dealing with revolutionary energy. In "The Cowleyan Pindaric Ode and Sublime Diversions," Scodel argues that "the seventeenth-century English vocabulary of diversion derives directly and indirectly from France, the home of so many Royalist exiles during the mid seventeenth century, where 'diversion', 'divertissement', and 'divertir' were deployed from the late sixteenth century onwards in senses that prefigure common seventeenth-

century English usage.”⁶⁷ He continues to trace how “the theory of diversion” is reflected in the works of royalists such as Cowley, Davenant, Dryden, and Heyrick. For example, Scodel quotes Dryden’s *An Essay of Dramatick Poesie* (1668) to illustrate the point that Dryden recommended comedies as a diversion for “his ‘sullen’ countrymen” lest “their ‘melancholy’ breed ‘sedition’.”⁶⁸ Scodel also sees the same political concerns at work when Thomas Heyrick apologetically defends his writing about a sea world in the preface to *The Submarine Voyage*:

Responding to the factional party strife of late seventeenth-century English life, Heyrick announces in his preface that he writes on 'Subjects of Indifferency' that will not disturb 'Quiet and Peace'. He proposes thereby 'to draw Men's Minds, that are Idle, from . . . Dangerous . . . Speculations' and 'Evil-Maxims against Church and State'. His Pindaric tour of the oceans attacks the 'unruly Appetite' of the 'Ambitious', whom 'never Bounds or Limits could contain', for leading to 'Anarchie'. Heyrick tries to divert his countrymen from dangerous thoughts and unruly ambitions by trumpeting poetry's own innocent ambitions.⁶⁹

Although it is not his primary purpose to examine the politics of Restoration drama, his article nonetheless helps us to understand that royalists’ learned debates on literature and

⁶⁷ Joshua Scodel, "The Cowleyan Pindaric Ode and Sublime Diversions," *A Nation Transformed: England after the Restoration*, eds. Alan Craig Houston and Steven C. A. Pincus (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 182.

⁶⁸ Ibid. 194.

⁶⁹ Ibid. 197.

drama were more than a display of their humanist knowledge but were rather something closely tied to the reformation of national politics.

The cultural campaign of the royalists to neutralize dangerous political discussion served to fuel the innovations of early Restoration drama. More refined sensibilities, witty and informed civil conversations, and visually pleasing details became characteristic of Restoration drama, which in one way or another strongly marked its turn away from political and religious controversies. To be more specific, libertine comedies usually foreground human sexuality and show how the rake hero skillfully exploits the intricate web of social relations to achieve his sexual goal (without damaging his social reputation). In short, the dramatic energies of the genre were typically conjoined to domestic and private concerns. Although more serious in tone and often conceived on an epic scale of adventure, Restoration's affective tragedy also shies away from thorny social and political issues; with "the absence of personal responsibility and the increasing importance of emotional expression," the tragedy of the hero and the heroine became "most personal" and its "social effects largely glossed over in dramatization."⁷⁰ When it comes to tragicomedy, the depoliticized nature of the dramatic practices is as clear as in the other two dramatic genres, if not more so. Distinguished by "superficial characterization, expedient motivation, and constant

⁷⁰ Christopher Wheatley, "Tragedy," *The Cambridge Companion to English Restoration Theatre* (Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 75; 78.

reversals and turns,” tragicomedy offers an ideal dramatic form of diversion and entertainment.⁷¹

It would be an oversimplification, of course, to assume that every Restoration drama serves as a mouthpiece of the late Stuart monarchy. As Susan Owen explains, in a moment of political tension such as the Exclusion Crisis (1678-83), the oppositional drama gained its momentum and sympathetically portrayed republicanism (*Lucius Junius Brutus*) or openly expressed hostile sentiments against Catholicism (*Henry III of France*). Even in a Royalist or Tory drama, there are many clever dramatic scenes in which the critical audience would find a covert criticism against royalist libertinism (*The Rover*) or an open criticism of the misdoings of parents or rulers (*The Venice Preserved*). Nonetheless, the oppositional voice often failed to pose a real threat to law and order for it was offered to the audience as one of many possible interpretations of the work rather than as a straightforward conviction from the heart. In short, the multiple interpretations that the author deliberately builds into his own work, which Annabel Patterson describes as “functional ambiguity,” serves to blunt the sharp criticism that the work might have originally harbored against a certain social group or an individual.⁷² In addition, the intricate web of patronage that the dramatist and the actors alike had to navigate, plus aesthetic ideals of using refined language and decorum, makes a critical stance of the drama in question less threatening. For example, in the case of Nathaniel Lee’s *Lucius Junius Brutus*, despite the outspoken references to republicanism and a sympathetic

⁷¹ Maguire, “Tragicomedy,” 91.

⁷² Annabel Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation : The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England* (Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), 18.

portrayal of Brutus, some contextual and textual elements (e.g. unfavorable description of the Roman people; Lee's assumed allegiance to a Tory) compromise its critical character.

Functional ambiguity, of course, can be applied to Milton's *Paradise Lost*. As I have pointed out earlier, in the early Restoration period, the name of Milton still resonated as an outspoken advocate of the regicide during the Commonwealth. In such an unfavorable political condition, it would have been extremely difficult for him to publish explicitly polemical tracts as he had done in the 1640s and 1650s. However, the relative freedom of expression traditionally bestowed on literary writers allowed Milton to articulate not only his anger and frustration but also his critical stance on the current society, although in an indirect manner.⁷³

The following passage can be exemplary of the ways in which Milton took advantage of poetic convention to share his thoughts with his "fit" readers:

Standing on Earth, not rapt above the Pole,
More safe I Sing with morral voice, unchang'd
To hoarce or mute, though fall'n on evil dayes,
On evil dayes though fall'n, and evil tongues;
In darkness, and with dangers compast round,

⁷³ According to Patterson, the literary practice of "ambiguity" has been served over centuries as "a creative and necessary instrument" for a literary writer to avoid censorship (18). With convincing examples to prove this point, Patterson shows that the authority during early modern times tolerated the oblique comments by literary writers as long as they remained ambiguous enough to be open to multiple interpretations on the part of the reader. For more details, see "Introduction" (3-31) in *Censorship and Interpretation*.

And solitude; yet not alone, while thou [Uranus]
 Visit'st my slumbers Nightly, or when Morn
 Purples the East: still govern thou my Song,
 Urania, and fit audience find, though few. (7:23-31)

A part of the third invocation in *Paradise Lost*, this passage shows a Milton who was unwavering in the cause of reformation and Christian liberty even after the Restoration. Milton portrays himself as being trapped in the evil world, (physically) separated from his likeminded readers. In the following lines, Milton continues to characterize the evil world as being governed by “the barbarous dissonance/ Of Bacchus and his revellers” (7:32-33). Given the widespread association of Charles II and his courtiers with excessive drinking and sex, this description makes likely that Milton here comments upon the corruption of the restored Stuart court. Against a backdrop of an increasingly corrupted society, Milton thus emerges as a visionary prophet/poet, who stands alone and unchanged, refusing to give up the hope that his song will eventually find its way, under the protection of the muse Urania, to the “fit audience.”

Spoken in the first person voice, the opening invocations in Book I, Book III, Book VII, and Book IV provide excellent opportunities to discern Milton's inner thoughts. From a perspective of theatricality, the invocations are also crucial to understand the dramatic mode of *Paradise Lost*, which is distinguished from that of Restoration drama in general. In epic tradition, the invocation is an established convention in which the author appeals to a muse for poetic inspiration. However, in

Paradise Lost, Milton uses invocation almost as a paratext where the author no longer resides in the internal world of representation. In this liminal zone, while stepping outside the story, Milton focuses on elements external to the text such as readers or the political and cultural conditions out of which the work has come, thereby breaking the illusion of representation and redefining the represented story in terms of the relevance of life, about which the author and his readers alike are ultimately concerned.

For example, in the invocation of Book I, we see Milton asking for inspiration from the Muse so that he will successfully “assert Eternal Providence/ And justify the ways of God to men” (1:25-26). Without the cultural contexts about Milton and his implied readers (i.e. dissenters) during the time when this poem was published, modern readers are likely to construe this moment of invocation as an authority-building cliché typically found in many early modern poems. But the deeper meaning of the passage can be found once we contextualize it within the collective experience of dissenters, who must have felt enormous despair and confusion when they found themselves ruled again by an ungodly king. As a Puritan who vehemently opposed England’s backsliding into a monarchy even at the eve of the Restoration, Milton might have experienced the same despair over the reversed political situation. Nevertheless, through the invocation, Milton makes it clear that he wrote this book not to blame God or to reiterate his disappointments with the ways things were. Despite the adversarial circumstances he and his readers were in, Milton said, he would continue to defend God’s plan and to have faith in it.

Milton's portrayal of the current dark age is more personalized and sophisticated in the second invocation in Book III. Using his blindness as a poetic trope, Milton here collapses the figurative and literal experience of darkness.

Thus with the Year
 Seasons return, but not to me returns
 Day, or the sweet approach of Ev'n or Morn,
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or Summers Rose,
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
 But cloud in stead, and ever-during dark
 Surrounds me, from the chearful wayes of men
 Cut off, and for the Book of knowledge fair
 Presented with a Universal blanc
 Of Natures works to mee expung'd and ras'd,
 And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out. (3:40-50)

The passage is primarily concerned with the painful experience of Milton as a blind man in the physical world of London. But when linked with the underlying theme of the invocations - the growing threat of darkness (evil force) upon the godly people- the description becomes more than personal or individual. It is noteworthy in this sense that Milton structures the experience of blindness in terms of loss and separation from the (beautiful and precious) external world. As in the first and third invocations, the

negative experience corresponding with the dominance of darkness is first introduced and highlighted only to be defeated in a dramatic reversal at the end.

So much the rather thou Celestial light
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight. (3:39-55)

Being now able to see “things invisible to mortal sight,” Milton no longer bemoans the loss of his eyesight. By constantly “wander[ing] where the Muses haunt/ Cleer Spring, or shadie Grove, or Sunnie Hill” (3:26-28) even after being blind, Milton became a wiser man, comparable to the blind prophets such “Tiresias” and “Phineus” (3:36). By telling an extraordinary story of his life as a poet, Milton could effectively illustrate the importance of faith in God and constant spiritual seeking, which has eventually transformed the outward loss into an inward gain. In this sense, the autobiographical anecdote Milton introduced in the invocation was not simply intended as an apology for his personal life but as a living testimony for the dissenters who needed spiritual inspiration in order to secure their faith and conscience in testing times.

The analysis of the invocations shows us that the dramatic pattern of fall and redemption is not confined to the story of Adam and Eve alone. By framing his life as well as the collective condition of the dissenters in the same dramatic pattern, Milton ensures that his story of Adam and Eve is not just a fable or romance to provide an

entertaining diversion from a writhing world. Instead, by establishing the points of relevance of the story to the political conditions of the Restoration that both Milton and dissenters were now suffering from, the invocations create a hermeneutic circle where the past event (i.e. the fall of Adam and Eve) sheds a light upon the meaning of the current persecution and vice versa. The hermeneutic circle in this way spiritualizes everyday experience whereas a past, biblical event is felt as an experience that is lived through and registered as the real.

The use of biblical story as a spiritual inspiration that will spark a godly zeal might appear to be not so radical as it was, especially when observed without the context of Restoration culture. Indeed, prior to Milton, there was a great Protestant tradition where a mundane object (or event) under the scrutiny of the poet served as a source for spiritual reflection as eminently exemplified in the religious poems of George Herbert (e.g. "The Windows," "The Flower") and John Donne (e.g. "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning," "Hymn to God, my God, in my Sickness"). However, as the hostile response of the author of *The Transproser Rehears 'd* (1673) to *Paradise Lost* testifies, this god-inspired language was increasingly a target of criticism by the royalists.⁷⁴ *The Transproser Rehears 'd* primarily aims to discredit Marvell's advocacy of the toleration of Protestant dissenters in his *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* (1672). As one of the tactics

⁷⁴ *The Transproser Rehears 'd* has been traditionally attributed to Richard Leigh, a Restoration poet who is perhaps best known for writing a prose tract attacking Dryden (i.e. *The Censure of the Rota on Mr. Dryden's Conquest of Granada*). But recently, Maltzahn von Nicholas, largely based upon the internal evidence of *The Transproser Rehears 'd* (i.e. the style and diction as well as the familiarity with Milton's works), raises a possibility that the work was actually penned by Samuel Butler. For more details about this authorship dispute, see Maltzahn von Nicholas, "Samuel Butler's Milton," *Studies in Philology* 92.4 (1995): 482-95.

to attack Marvell's moral character, the author of *The Transproser Rehears* 'ddeliberately associates Marvell with "his friend Mr. Milton,"⁷⁵ whose name evoked the memory of republicanism and regicide.⁷⁶ In a tone of wry humor and biting satire, the author ridicules Milton's literary enthusiasm by calling him a "romancer" and attributing "the hostile Shapes and Military Figures" in *Paradise Lost* to the symptoms of his "Melancholy."⁷⁷

The author also upbraids the divine metaphor of light in *Paradise Lost*, which Milton uses to signify the spiritual sanctity of the individual's inwardness. The author directly quotes the passage from the second invocation in Book III, mainly to show how Milton's love of "Chimerical conceits" drove him insane to the extent that he madly mistook the light for God and mourned his blindness for causing him to be separated from God's sun:

No doubt but the thoughts of this *Vital Lamp* lighted a *Christmas* Candle
in his brain, What dark meaning he may have in calling this *thick drop*
Serene, I am not able to say; but for his *Eternal Coeternal*, besides the

⁷⁵ *The transproser rehears'd*, London: 1673, 127.

⁷⁶ The friendship between Milton and Marvell has been a fascinating subject in Restoration scholarship. It is relatively well known that Marvell and Milton served together as secretaries in Cromwell's government. There has also been a speculation about the role of Marvell in saving a life of Milton when he was arrested in the Tower of London some point in the autumn of 1660. For more details about this relationship, see Barbara Lewalski, *The Life of John Milton: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003) 224-5, 293, 403-4, 509-10. More a complicated reading, although not overwhelmingly convincing, of the friendship of these two writers, see John McWilliams, "Marvell and Milton's Literary Friendship Reconsidered," *SEL* 46.1 (2006): 155-77.

⁷⁷ *The Transproser Rehears'd*, 40; 41.

absurdity of his inventive Divinity, in making *Light* contemporary with
it's Creator . . . ⁷⁸

The author also finds fault with Milton's use of blank verse, and implicitly criticizes Milton's radical justification of using blank verse in a preface to *Paradise Lost*. In "Verse," Milton argues that rhyme is "the Invention of a barbarous Age," a "custom" that has crippled the creative energy of the poets for many generations "much to thir own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise." So, for Milton, the use of blank verse over rhyme is a deliberate aesthetic choice, which should "be esteem'd an example set, the first in *English*, of ancient liberty recover'd to Heroic Poem from the troublesom and modern bondage of Rimeing."⁷⁹ Milton's envisioning of his literary enterprise as a radical break from suppressive literary conventions echoes the fiery rhetoric of polemic writers during the 1640s and 50s, and it is in this very sense that the writer of *The Transproser Rehears* 'daccuses Milton as being "Schismatick in Poetry" and "nonconformable in point of rhyme."⁸⁰

Although in a much more respectful and polite tone, Nathaniel Lee's commendatory verse on Dryden's *State of Innocence*, also takes on Milton's poetic style. Although never performed in public, Dryden's *State of Innocence* was originally written as an operatic adaptation of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, apparently with Milton's consent, and it appeared in print in 1677. Lee had formed a strong friendship and professional

⁷⁸ Ibid. 42.

⁷⁹ John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Barbara Lewalski (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2007), 10.

⁸⁰ *The Transproser Rehears'd*, 43.

bond with Dryden during this time under the same patronage of the Earl of Mulgrave (Edmund Sheffield), and often corresponded to compliment Dryden's dramatic works and his literary talents. The stage directions on the published text indicate that if it had been staged, the work would have been a spectacular and fantastic performance featuring elaborate stage machinery and exotic costumes. Aside from adding visual effects, Dryden replaced Milton's blank verse with his favorite rhyming scheme – heroic couplets. The result of these dramatic revisions is to turn Milton's *Paradise Lost* into a Restoration heroic drama, where stylized verbal exchanges between Adam and Eve are the center of dramatic energy, encouraging the audience to enjoy an emotional rollercoaster from fear of separation and jealousy to sacrificial love. It is no wonder, then, that Lee, who shared courtly aesthetic values with Dryden, praised Dryden's revision as a great improvement upon the original:

To the dead Bard, your fame a little owes,
 For *Milton* did the Wealthy Mine disclose,
 And rudely cast what you cou'd well dispose:
 He roughly drew, on an old fashion'd ground,
 A Chaos, for no perfect World was found,
 Till through the heap, your mighty Genius shin'd;
 His was the Golden Ore which you refin'd.
 He first beheld the beauteous rustic Maid,
 And to a place of strength the prize convey'd;

You took her thence: to Court this Virgin brought
 Drest her with gemms, new weav'd her hard spun thought
 And softest language, sweetest manners taught.
 Till from a Comet she a star did rise,
 Not to affright, but please our wondring eyes.⁸¹

In the view of Lee, Milton was lucky to find “the Wealthy Mine” but he had no artistic talents equal to Dryden’s. He admits that the story of *Paradise Lost* is rich and promising but Milton’s “old fashion’d” representation of the story made it chaotic and less pleasing (“rustic”). Only through the refined hands of Dryden, Lee continues to suggest, the rustic Maid (i.e. the original story) became attractive and charming enough to engage “our wondering eyes” and worthy to be staged in the fashionable place of the royal court. In the later lines of the poem, Lee also expresses his disapproval of the tragic and serious tone dominating Milton’s work. He maintains that Dryden’s “Sense his [Milton’s] mystic reason clear’d,” and “the melancholy Scene [of the original] all gay appear’d.”

The royalists’ negative characterization of Milton’s literary performance as being mysterious, chaotic, and even melancholic has a strong parallel with the unsavory caricature of the dissenters by Anglican apologists. Samuel Parker, who was a staunch advocate of no-toleration policy for the dissenters, used the same language Lee and the writer of *The Transproser Rehears’d* had applied to Milton’s *Paradise Lost* when he

⁸¹ Nathaniel Lee, “To Mr. Dryden, on his Poem of Paradise,” *The State of Innocence, and Fall of Man an Opera* (London: 1677), A4r.

trounced “the folly “of the dissenters’ “spiritual divinity” in his *A Defence and Continuation of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1671). In the eyes of Parker, the dissenters were “Brain-sick People to debauch the Divine Wisdom of his Religion [Christianity] with childish and trifling Follies” (86). Instead of pursuing “the Rational Accounts of the Christian Faith” and “all sober Grounds of the Divine Authority of the holy Scriptures,” Parker argues that with “all pretences to Inspiration” the dissenters were “rowling up and down in such ambiguous Phrases, as implying something distinct from moral Vertue” (148; 343). In the same vein, Parker refused to acknowledge the dissenters’ claim of being reborn in God’s spirit and their saintly status, and instead suggested that the experience was nothing other than a product of their sickly imagination:

Again, *to be united to Christ, and to be grafted in him*, are still more Tautologies for the same thing, though they indeed use them to express some secret and mysterious intercourse between the Lord Christ and a believing soul; and from hence spring the doctrines of Withdrawings and Desertions, of Discoveries and Manifestations, of Spiritual Closings and Refreshments, and all other innumerable Tricks of Melancholy and Enthusiasm.⁸²

In some sense, Parker’s accusation against the Dissenters for performing “innumerable tricks of Melancholy” echoes the criticism that Milton had leveled against King Charles for his deceptive performance in *Eikon Basilike*. The same theatrical language Parker

⁸² Samuel Parker, *A Defence and Continuation of the Ecclesiastical Politie* (London :1671), 344

exploits to discredit the religious enthusiasm of the Dissenters indicates the pervasiveness of the dramatic imagination in the polemical works by both Royalists and their opponents. Parker's vehement attacks against the Dissenters also show that religious matters even during the Restoration continued to be not only a center of public controversy but also a powerful source of drama. As shown in the earlier example of the London printer Twyn, making a public spectacle against the person or the group with a different religious faith was imperative for the Royalists to maintain their law and order.

Thus far, I've attempted to depict Milton's *Paradise Lost* as a literary work, whose aesthetic mode and values indicate a strong affinity with the culture of the dissenters during the Restoration. Through this study, I've wanted to show that the dissenters' culture is not simply a sub-culture of Restoration society, coexisting peacefully with the main stream of Restoration culture. Their culture and their literary imagination had become a target of royalists' criticism, and the early responses to Milton's *Paradise Lost* among the royalists illustrate this trend. Of course, the dissenters also fought back and expressed, although usually in a more cautious and clandestine manner, their disapproval of the elite culture of the Stuart court and its use of the public theaters to spearhead its cultural agenda. For example, the Quaker leader William Penn censures the moral depravity of "innocent entertainments" popular among the foppish, worldly men of London in his *No Cross, No Crown* (1669). Penn observes that "their usual entertainment is some stories fetch'd from the more approved Romances. Some strange Adventures, some passionate Amours, unkind Refuses, grand Impediments,

tedious Addresses, miserable Disappointments, wonderful Surprizes, unexpected Rencounters, and meeting of Supposed dead Lover, bloody Duels, languishing Voices” (41). According to him, these fanciful entertainments are morally dangerous distractions because the entertainments are “on purpose to excite their minds to those respective passions, and intoxicate their giddy fancies with swelling nothings (but airy fictions),” thus distracting their attention away from “the divine life and principle of the holy Jesus” (41; 43). As Penn’s criticism of Restoration drama indicates, the dissenters often considered the innovations introduced to drama by the royalists as morally backsliding. The mutual antipathies between these two politically opposing groups in regard to their cultural practices show that the Restoration was still in the middle of cultural and ideological conflicts that had formed the English civil war. By refusing to accept and use the literary forms aggressively campaigned by the royalists, Milton aligned himself with the dissenters and sought to provide a different form of dramatic experience that would accommodate reformation zeal and energy and that would help the persecuted saints endure a trying time.

D. Conclusion

Throughout this chapter I have tried to establish the relationship between the Dissenters and Milton largely through a critical reading of *Paradise Lost* and the polemic writings by the Royalists. But we are still in an early stage of grounding this relationship in historical knowledge. It is true that recent scholars provide important historical details and information to fill in the gap in our knowledge about Milton and

the Dissenter groups especially in London. Achinstein, for example, shows that the place in which Milton lived (i.e. Cripplegate) was “an area of London noted for its nonconformist concentration”: “A haven for Huguenots, those persecuted French Protestant dissenters who had long affiliated with Puritans, Cripplegate boasted the highest number of ejected ministers in the younger Edmund Calamy’s account.”⁸³ Gary De Krey’s recent studies about London politics during the Restoration also make us rethink the hitherto underestimated political power of the dissenters. In his book, *London and the Restoration, 1659-1683*, Krey shows that the corporation of London became a strong oppositional base for the dissenters during the 1670s, powerful enough to compete with the Crown and the Parliament in the control of civic affairs of London (134-66). Stephen Dobranski, moreover, convincingly argues the collaborative aspects of *Paradise Lost*. In *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade*, he tracks down Milton’s close collaboration with Samuel Simmons, a London printer and bookseller who published *Paradise Lost* and whose father had been a favored printer for independents and radicals, including Milton, during the civil wars (6, 35-40, 86). All of these new perspectives on London society help us rethink the relationship between Milton and the dissenter community during the Restoration, but to have a more comprehensive picture of the Restoration Milton, we should also think about the methods and approaches we are using more than simply adding new information and historical facts. For example, interpreting literary texts according to genres and periods can be critically reviewed and

⁸³ Sharon Achinstein, *Literature and Dissent in Milton’s England*, 116.

asked to what extent these established cognitive tools obscure rather than clarify our understanding of the text in question.

Before closing this chapter, it should be noted that my study is intended to open up more fruitful debate rather than provide conclusive answers in regard to Milton and his placement in the literary history of the Restoration. Milton's *Paradise Lost* is chosen to reveal the problems with the periodic conception of the Restoration as an Augustan age of peace and prosperity safely removed from the religious and ideological conflicts that had characterized the English civil wars. Milton's epic also illustrates the blind spot of the traditional approach in the study of early modern drama, which narrows its attention to the established –thus stabilized- social space of theater and the activities within it. Milton's epic shows that theatricality itself is not always and necessarily contained within a specific cultural space. As we have seen in the first chapter, theatricality can be reinvented in different social settings, where traditional theatrical apparatuses (e.g. physical venue; costume; dance and music) are not available and have to be replaced – or displaced- with other sets of cultural elements (e.g. print media; woodcut; readerly performance). The semiotic fluidity across periods and across genres, which my study has highlighted, might appear equivocal and even nonsensical to those who want to have clear-cut answers to the raised questions. But, in my opinion, imposing an either-or answer, such as whether Milton's *Paradise Lost* is a drama or not, is not the most fruitful approach for studying a literary work, since it tends to suppress or ignore the facts and details that are potentially threatening to well-demarcated cultural

and epistemological boundaries. Rather than policing the textual and non-textual traffic across cultural space, it appears to be more meaningful to follow the points of contact, exchange, and displacement between one cultural domain and another to give faithful description to the cultural phenomena in question.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION/EPILOGUE

With theatricality at the center of their discussion, my first two chapters have examined how the political struggles and the negotiations of the English civil wars had created a milieu favorable to the emergence of new forms of theatricality. The burgeoning cheap print media during this time such as newsbooks and pamphlets was studied in the first chapter in order to show how these forms of print media not only exploited established theatrical apparatuses (dialogues, personification, and plotting of the events) but also offered a different kind of theatrical experience by transforming everyday events into never-ending sequences of human drama. As part of this study, we have also looked at the correlation between the explosive growth of cheap print (in later time to be called “yellow journalism”) and the legal suppression of public theatrical activities in order to map out how the revolutionary energy might migrate into new cultural spaces and create a different set of options for scenic, gestural, and verbal narratives simultaneously conditioned by and conditioning its readers.

As we have seen, one of the conceptual obstacles in appreciating the development of theatricality during the civil wars is the widespread assumption by earlier generations of critics and historians that Puritans as a group simply hated the theater. Although in the first chapter I’ve revisited the closing of theaters by the Long Parliament in 1642 to challenge this association between Puritanism, anti-theatricalism, and parliamentary action, more discussion needs to be carried out to reveal the deeper

problems with this simplified understanding of theatrical history as being bound within the physical playing space of the commercial stage. The second chapter was undertaken with the view of challenging the reductive stereotype of Puritans in a traditional drama history by focusing on the discourse and practices of iconoclasm before and during the English civil wars. Opposing the narrow definition of iconoclasm as a fanatical movement aimed at destroying images and pictures, the chapter shows that iconoclasm was a distinctive protestant cultural ethos, which functioned as something of a floating signifier in the symbolic order of nation. I argue, the destructions of images and pictures are only the surface (or partial) effects of iconoclasm; more significant is the deconstructive force inherent to iconoclasm, which destabilized the established relationship between word and image, and energized various forms of worship and divine experiences by depriving the privileged signifiers (i.e. King and Church) of their abilities to control the symbolic order.

Although I do have some discussion in the first two chapters concerning the issue of periodization (e.g. the continuing influence of the civil war experience during the Restoration in the formation of the public sphere; the reformation conflicts and movement whose duration defies the compartmentalized periodic distinctions of the seventeenth century), it is clear that a more extensive approach to the issue needs to be made to fully reveal the problems with the rupture model emphasizing the radical discontinuity between the Restoration and the English civil wars. The third chapter on Milton was written to clarify how previous discussions of theatricality and the revised

role of Puritans in drama history can help us to challenge the existing rupture model and to construct an alternative, historical narrative not only about Milton's *Paradise Lost* but also about the cultural reforms championed by the Royalists. By focusing on the neglected role of the Dissenters during the Restoration, the third chapter is able to portray Milton's literary activities during the Restoration as a covert resistance to the cultural conformity promulgated by Royalist dramatists and Anglican advocates. The third chapter in this sense invites us to rethink the traditional image of the Restoration Milton as a lone figure as well as the heroic role given to Charles II in the history of the "revival" of drama during the Restoration.

My focus on theatricality as opposed to a reductionist understanding of "theatre" as being only performance on commercial stages highlights the major theoretical issue in my dissertation, the model of historical period division which has been traditionally used by literary critics. The scholarly practices of temporal distinctions in the field of literature have remained largely unquestioned, even though many other epistemological categories that scholars use in shaping their understandings of literature, such as literary genres, gender, class and race, recently have been complicated and explored. The lack of interest on the part of literary scholars in the politics of period distinctions can be partially attributed to the belief that organizing a temporal structure of a given society is a province of history, an area that literary critics should not enter unless they are properly trained as historians. It's true that this assumption itself is being challenged thanks to the increasing dialogues between literary critics and social and cultural

historians, and without the academic trend encouraging this type of interdisciplinary dialogue, my dissertation would not have been possible. Nonetheless, an assumption that there is -- or should be -- only one time structure for a given society seems to remain powerful. Thus, at the same time that literary and social historians are increasingly questioning the year 1660 as “one of the great turning-points in English history” (Metcalf 198), they are simultaneously seeking a controlling year to replace it, and, as a result, many of them are now starting to look at the year 1688 (i.e. the Glorious Revolution) as an alternative turning-point.¹ It is beyond the scope of my dissertation here to confirm whether the year 1688 was more revolutionary than 1660. My only concern with this trend is that promoting the year 1688 as an alternative year of revolutionary change does not automatically promise a better understanding of early modern England. The year 1688 is significant only from a certain perspective and point of view. When we uncritically accept the year 1688 as the “new” decisive point in English history and mechanically apply it to the subject of early modern England, the study results, needless to say, would be less interesting and insightful. Instead of considering a historic time period as external, universally valid information that can be easily exported and applied to various subjects, we need to think of it as something internal to the story being told, something subject to change according to the perspective the researcher is adopting.

¹ For the critical references emphasizing the year 1688 as a beginning of the revolutionary changes in English history, see Steven Pincus, “Introduction: The Revolution of 1688-1689: The First Modern Revolution,” *England’s Glorious Revolution 1688-1689* (Boston & New York: Bedford, 2006), 1-33; Jonathan Scott, *England’s Troubles*, 473-76.

The historian Joan Kelly-Gadol's classic essay "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" is a good example to illustrate my point. Tracing the major changes in the courtly love tradition and the representation of women within the genre, Kelly-Gadol finds an interesting parallel between the passive role imposed upon women in the typical Renaissance literature and the decline of women's political power in real life. The decrease of freedom and political power that [aristocratic] women experienced in the Renaissance leads Kelly-Gadol to conclude that "there was no renaissance for women" and to oppose the idea of using "the accepted schemes of periodization" in women's history.² It remains a question whether the aristocratic women's experience in the Renaissance can be privileged to represent the experience of the whole population of women in the Renaissance, as well as whether the political power of aristocratic women had actually dwindled with the advent of the Renaissance. Nevertheless her scholarly article serves as a telling example of how an attempt to break free of male-centered history can lead to questioning of traditional periodization in ways that invigorate new avenues of scholarly exploration.

In a similar manner that Feminism and New Historicism enriches and complicates our understanding of early modern literature by adopting a different historical perspective, our new understanding of theatricality enables us to explore the social and cultural domains or events whose significance, whether historical, literary, or political, has not been fully appreciated. For example, our new understanding of

² Joan Kelly-Gadol, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, eds. Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), 139.

theatricality invites further studies of readerly performance during early modern times so that we can track down, in a more coordinated way than is possible now, the dynamic between reading and performance in terms of gender, class, and so on. The newly conceptualized theatricality can also spark a new round of discussion about the emergence of novels as a literary genre. More specifically, the redefined concept of theatricality can better account for the interaction between theatricality and Puritan ethics in Daniel Defoe's novels, such as *Roxana*, and *Robinson Crusoe*, by providing an alternative viewpoint about the relationship of the two. Of course, when new findings are emerging from these lines of inquiry, they are likely to complicate rather than simply affirm the concept of theatricality as introduced in my dissertation, in a similar way my study of English civil war and polemic culture during the time has complicated the concept of theatricality established by Foucault and Greenblatt. The theory of theatricality in this sense is still in the process of evolution, and it is my hope that this dissertation can make a modest contribution to this important intellectual development.

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